

# N A T I O N A L CROSSTALK

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## The M Word

**"Marketing" has changed from a dirty word to a buzzword in higher education**

By Jon Marcus

BOSTON

WITH EVERY HIT that echoed from the hallowed walls of Fenway Park, every roar from the hopeful sell-out crowds of fans who had been praying for this 2004 World Series, seasons of heartbreak inched closer to an end. Success hung in the brisk October air. Respect was finally at hand. With every pitch, a longtime Boston institution grew nearer to reversing years of despair.

And it wasn't just the Red Sox.

There, on Fenway's right-field grandstands, between the ads for soft drinks, beer and life insurance, hung a simple red and white billboard. It had been almost a whim, an outgrowth of some research that suggested baseball fans aspired to enroll their kids in college. At the beginning of the season, when the arrangements had been made, no rational New Englander would have believed this was the year it would be beamed to tens of millions as the

nation watched the ultimate sports drama reach its climax.

"Northeastern University," advertised the billboard.

"It was fortuitous timing," said Northeastern's Brian Kenny, with understatement.

***Like consumer product manufacturers, schools including Northeastern University and DePaul now conduct marketing analyses before adding new programs.***

ment uncharacteristic of a university vice president of marketing.

In addition to being a great stroke of luck, Northeastern's billboard inside Fenway Park was part of an aggressive and extraordinarily successful marketing campaign by a school whose very survival had



MI MALONEY, BLACK STAR, FOR CROSSTALK

**Northeastern President Richard Freeland welcomes fans to NU Family Day at Fenway Park in Boston. This is part of Northeastern's marketing campaign.**

been threatened, only years before, by a sharp drop in enrollment. It was also the vanguard of a new wave of marketing by universities and colleges—no longer just the ones that might be vulnerable to enrollment or financial problems, but also

healthy institutions that had long looked down their noses at such things.

"I've seen 'marketing' change from a dirty word to a buzzword," said Michael Norris, director of communications and ***continued on page 14***

## A Contrarian View of the Testing Industry

**FairTest argues that standardized tests are a poor predictor of student success**

By Robert A. Jones

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

MONTY NEILL, the executive director of FairTest, stood in an empty room on an empty floor of a vintage office building near Harvard

***From its start in 1986, FairTest has played the role of outsider in the clubby, often opaque world of standardized testing.***

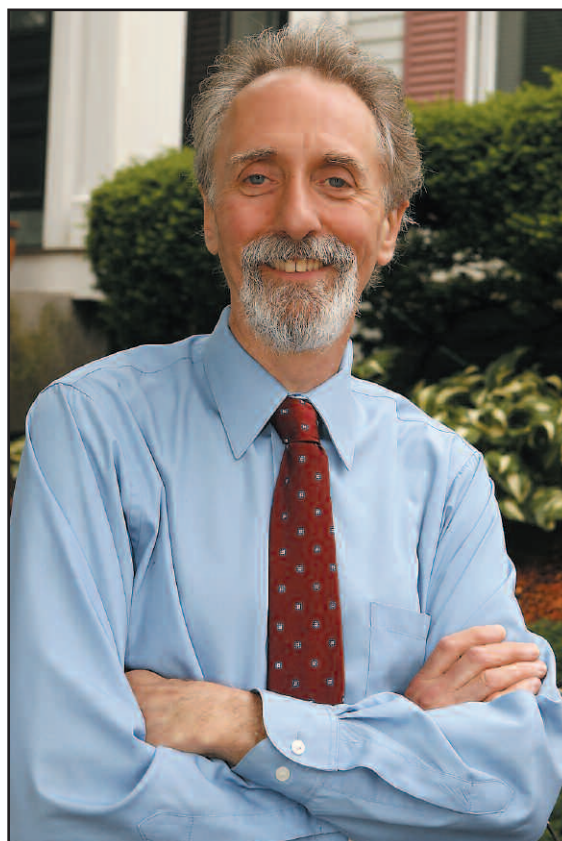
University. He motioned to a corner. That's where a FairTest researcher once worked. And over there, along the wall, stood a row of file cabinets packed with research materials going back 20 years.

Robert Schaeffer, one of FairTest's founders and still its public education director, stood next to Neill, looking a bit uneasy. Even now, he said, it can feel

embarrassing to talk publicly about the near collapse of the organization that has consumed most of his life's work. FairTest, he said, has played its role as gadfly in the world of standardized testing for so long that many assumed it could not stumble and fall.

But stumble it certainly did. Over the past two years FairTest has progressively retrenched as its financial backers, mostly foundations, withdrew their support. Last October, the situation became so dire that the Board of Directors briefly considered shutting its doors. Ultimately they decided to hunker down instead, leaving only Neill and Schaeffer on the payroll and shrinking the office space to a fraction of its former size.

Now, nine months later, FairTest's crisis has eased somewhat. Revenues from the organization's website increased in the spring, thanks largely to the group's role in uncovering the SAT scoring scandal at



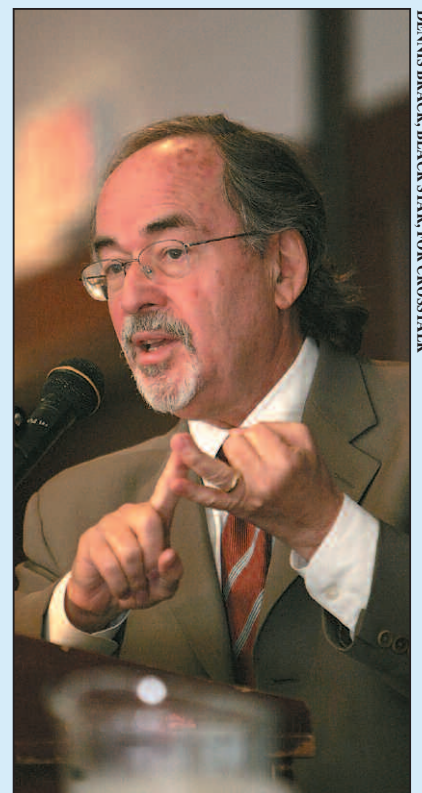
MI MALONEY, BLACK STAR, FOR CROSSTALK

**Monty Neill is executive director of FairTest, persistent critics of standardized testing, especially the SAT.**

FairTest's longtime adversary, the College Entrance Examination Board. Visits to the website increased dramatically along with some private donations.

The notion of FairTest being saved by ***continued on page 5***

## In This Issue



DENNIS BRACK, BLACK STAR, FOR CROSSTALK

**DAVID HOROWITZ'** claims that college and university faculties are dominated by professors with left wing views have stirred up controversies in several states. (See page 8.)





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## NEWS FROM THE CENTER

# Virginia B. Smith Award

**D**AVID S. SPENCE, president of the Southern Regional Education Board and former executive vice chancellor of the California State University system, has been awarded the Virginia B. Smith Innovative Leadership award for 2006.

As Cal State vice chancellor, Spence led the effort to develop a voluntary early assessment program (EAP) that enables high school juniors to identify weaknesses in their college preparation work in time to correct the deficiencies in their senior year.

"The EAP has made college readiness standards more concrete for schools, teachers and, most importantly, students," said Patrick M. Callan, president of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. "Through his work with the program, David Spence has helped to connect these standards to the high school curriculum."

The National Center and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning jointly administer the award, which is named for Virginia B. Smith, President Emerita of Vassar College and longtime supporter of innovation in higher education. ♦



AXEL KOESTER FOR CROSSTALK



ROD SEARCY FOR CROSSTALK

## Measuring Up 2006 will be Released September 7

**P**REPARATION of the "Measuring Up" reports published by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education has been guided by a team of higher education policy experts, shown at a recent meeting of the advisory committee in San Jose, California.

Back row (left to right): Sue Hodges Moore, vice president for planning, policy and budget, Northern Kentucky University; Peter T. Ewell, vice president, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems; Alan Wagner, professor and chair, Department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies, State University of New York at Albany; Richard D. Wagner, retired executive director, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Emerson J. Elliott, retired commissioner, National

Center for Education Statistics; and Jane Wellman, senior associate, Institute for Higher Education Policy.

Front Row (left to right): Margaret A. Miller, director, Center for the Study of Higher Education, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia; Dennis P. Jones, president, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems; David W. Breneman, University Professor and Dean, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia; and Gordon K. Davies, director, National Collaborative for Postsecondary Education Policy.

Professor Wagner is a consultant on the project but not a member of the advisory committee. Another consultant, William P. Doyle, assistant professor at Vanderbilt University, was not present when the photograph was taken. ♦



# Charles B. Reed

## Cal State chancellor strives to promote quality and diversity in the nation's largest four-year college system

By Kathy Witkowski

LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

**T**HERE ARE TWO THINGS you need to know about Charlie Reed, chancellor of the massive California State University and one of the nation's most respected higher education administrators. For eight years now, Reed has headed the largest four-year system in the country, using his unique blend of political instincts, competitive drive and direct, plain-spoken manner to keep Cal State "on the move," as he likes to put it.

Number one, Charles Bass Reed loves to work. "I don't think anyone can out-work me," he said during a recent interview. This is not a boast so much as a statement of fact, one that comes up in nearly every conversation you have about Reed. "His biggest strength is his dedication to the system, his willingness to work unbelievable hours, and his tremendous energy," said Murray Galinson, immediate past chair of the Cal State Board of Trustees.

Even non-fans—and there aren't many—concede that point. As president of the Cal State Faculty Association, the faculty union that has been in protracted and contentious negotiations with the administration for more than a year, John Travis has been one of Reed's harshest and most vocal critics. Nonetheless, Travis acknowledged, "Charlie has worked very hard to promote his vision. And I will give him credit for that."

Charlie Reed's vision, like the man himself, is at once both extraordinarily straightforward and extremely ambitious. He wants his 23-campus, 44,000-employee system to serve more students, because education is their ticket to better jobs and better health, which in turn will create a better economy. "That's what universities are supposed to do, is improve the quality of life of

its citizens," said Reed.

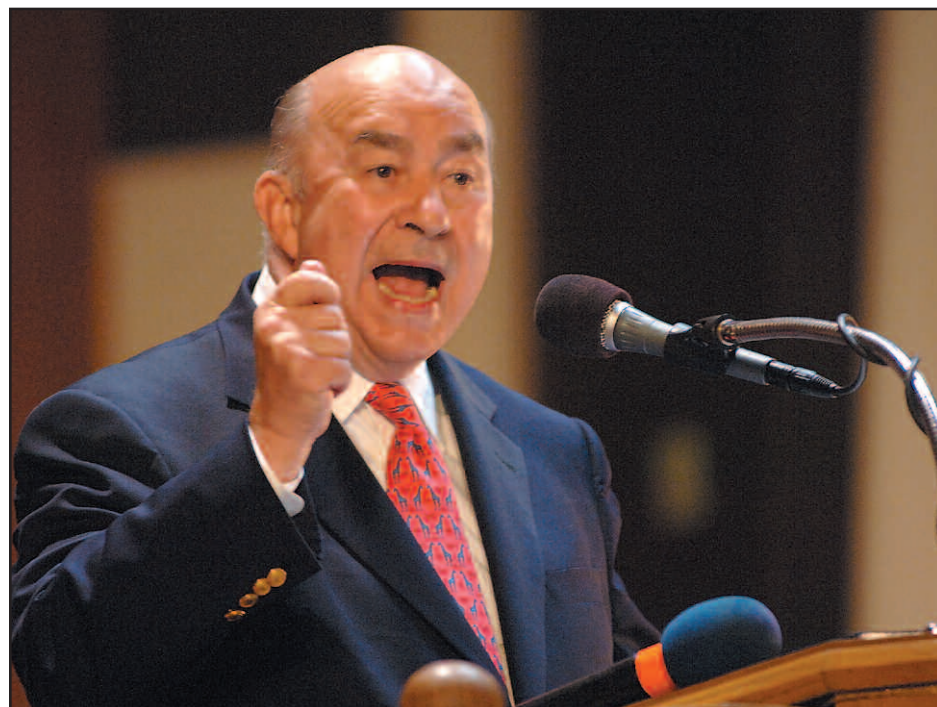
And to do that, Reed says, Cal State must reach beyond its 405,000 students and into the state's K-12 classrooms, where many students aren't getting the education they need to succeed in college. More than half of all incoming Cal State freshmen need remedial coursework in English or math, or both.

Because Cal State prepares 55 to 60 percent of the state's public school teachers, it is in a position to improve that dismal remedial statistic. That is why Reed has been so focused on improving and expanding the institution's teacher training programs, which have grown 65 percent since he arrived. Cal State now graduates 15,000 teachers a year, but the state still faces a critical shortage of math and science teachers. So Cal State has undertaken a \$2 million, five-year effort to double the number of math and science teachers it prepares, from 800 to 1,600.

But numbers aren't enough, said Reed: Cal State must also improve the quality of teaching. It has begun to offer a free 80-hour retraining program for math and English teachers. Next year, it will compare reading scores of Cal State-trained teacher classrooms to those of teachers trained elsewhere.

Also under Reed's leadership, Cal State has garnered national attention for innovative programs designed to help students prepare for college. One of the simplest is also among the best known: Cal State has distributed more than 70,000 copies of its free "Steps to College" poster, a Reed brainchild that spells out what middle school and high school students need to do to get there. It is available in five languages.

Meanwhile, more than 150,000 high school juniors have used Cal State's voluntary early assessment program, or EAP,



PHOTOS BY ROD SEARCEY FOR CROSSTALK

*Chancellor Charles B. Reed addresses the congregation at Oakland's Allen Temple Baptist Church, part of Cal State's extensive outreach effort.*

which allows them to take an augmented version of a mandatory 11th-grade standardized exam so they can find out if they're ready for college-level work; if not, they still have a chance to catch up during their senior year. Should they choose, they can do so online, through tutorial websites Cal State has developed.

"He's one of the most important players in K-12 education," said Jack O'Connell, California state superintendent of public instruction, who refers to himself as chairman of the Charlie Reed fan club. "He's helped us break down the walls of all the segments of education."

Reed is trying to bust through racial and ethnic barriers as well. Fifty-five percent of Cal State students are minorities. That sounds like a lot, but the figure is still far less than it should be, said Reed, who wants the Cal State population to better reflect the population in the state's high schools, where more than two-thirds of students are minorities. So this year, Reed has stepped up the outreach, going beyond the public schools and into the communities of underrepresented students.

Top administrators from Cal State, including university presidents and Reed himself, have made presentations during Sunday services at 19 African American churches in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area to persuade potential students and their families that college is an important goal. Just seven percent of Cal State students are African American; only one third of these are male.

More than 30,000 people attended these two so-called Super Sunday events; afterwards, some people stood in line for nearly half an hour to collect the materials that Cal State was handing out. The enthusiastic response thrilled Reed. "If you've never had a grandparent or parent, brother or sister, who's been to a university, what the hell do you think you'd know about college?" he said. "They were starved for information."

The events garnered praise from the church pastors and congregation members. And Assemblyman Mervyn Dymally, who has been involved in politics for nearly half a century and currently chairs the Califor-

nia Legislative Black Caucus, called them, "an act of political genius."

"That was a coup," said Dymally. "I've never known a white college administrator to get into a black church."

Administrators from Cal State have also met with Vietnamese American, Native American and Hispanic community leaders. Cal State plans to continue the outreach, which will include two more Super Sundays next year.

In the meantime, Reed said, Cal State must also continue to improve articulation agreements with community colleges, the gateway for 55 percent of Cal State under-

***Charlie Reed's vision for the California State University system, like the man himself, is at once both extraordinarily straightforward and extremely ambitious.***

graduates. It must make better use of technology to help reduce the time it takes for students to graduate—currently about five and a half years for first-time freshmen—so it can accommodate more students. It must partner with industry to ensure that it is teaching the right job skills and providing internships.

And, armed with a recent economic impact study that quantifies the jobs and the money Cal State generates for the state (82,000 annual graduates, 1.7 million alumni, earning \$89 billion annually), it must convince Californians of its value so it can raise more money from the private sector. The system still has not recovered from more than \$500 million in cuts it suffered during California's recent budget crisis.

The success of the institution rides on its ability to make progress in all those areas, Reed said, because they're inextricably intertwined. It's a tough juggling act, but Reed thrives on the challenge. "I like

*continued next page*



*California Assemblyman Mervyn Dymally called Reed's church appearance "an act of political genius."*



from preceding page

keeping all those balls in the air,” he said. That he is able to do so makes him a rare talent, said David Ward, president of the American Council on Education. “He’s without question one of the big thinkers about big solutions,” said Ward. “As system president, he really does look at things from the broad social perspective rather than an institutional or campus perspective. And he does that very, very well.”

Reed is up at five o’clock and at his Long Beach office by 6:30, where he prepares two pots of coffee for his staff before he attacks his lengthy “working list” of priorities, which is updated every couple of months, and which he has whittled down

**Reed has been focused on improving and expanding Cal State’s teacher training programs, which have grown 65 percent since he arrived.**

from 56 when he first took the job to a mere 30 today. In his eight years as chancellor, Reed has never missed a single workday; what’s more, he routinely works weekends, putting in three weeks straight before taking a day off.

On his office shelves, surrounded by photographs and autographed sports paraphernalia, is a framed motto that sums up Reed’s approach to life: “You work as hard as you can all day, and if you make a mistake, you fix it. That’s all you can do.” Now 64, Reed has lived by that creed ever since he was a child growing up in the tiny coal

## California State University

Students: 405,000  
Campuses: 23  
Faculty: 22,500  
Total employees: 44,000  
Percentage of students who are minorities: 55  
Ethnic breakdown of students: 45 percent Caucasian; 26 percent Hispanic; 15 percent Asian American; 7 percent African American; 5 percent Filipino; less than 2 percent Native American or Pacific Islander  
Average age: 25  
Percentage of undergraduates who are first-generation college students: About 30  
Percentage of freshmen who need remedial classes: 55  
Number of annual graduates: 82,000, about half of all the bachelor’s degrees and a third of the master’s degrees awarded annually in California  
Average annual cost: \$3,164

mining town of Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, where he was the oldest of eight siblings, and where he met his wife of 42 years, Catherine.

She first noticed him when they were both in junior high. Reed had a job at a produce stand, and she and her friends would see him as they drove past on their way to the swimming pool. “One day I got my mother to stop at the fruit market and I asked why he didn’t want to go to the swimming pool,” recalled Catherine Reed. “And he said he really liked to work, and that was more fun for him than going to the swimming pool.”

As much as Charlie Reed loves to work, he hates to lose. And that’s the second thing you need to know about him. “He will never lose,” said Catherine Reed. “It might appear that he loses, but he’ll be back.” And back. And back. And back. Until eventually, she said, he’ll win.

Reed developed his competitive instincts on the gridiron, where he played both offense and defense. First he was quarterback and linebacker for his high school football team, which he led to the state finals. Then he played halfback and defensive cornerback for George Washington University, which he attended on a football scholarship, majoring in health and physical education, and where he later earned his master’s degree in secondary education and an Ed.D. in teacher education.

Reed honed his political skills as education policy coordinator for former Florida Governor (and later U.S. Senator) Bob Graham, who came to value Reed’s dedication and political instincts so much that he eventually promoted him through the ranks to chief of staff. Before Graham traded the governor’s office for the Senate, Reed accepted the position of chancellor of the Florida State University system. He held the job for an unprecedented 12 and a half years in a state where, as Reed describes it, “universities are a political sport.”

And like football, it’s a game he learned to play exceptionally well.

“Football shaped his competitive, blunt personality,” said Graham, who considers Reed a close friend. “He was not just a football player, he was a linebacker, which meant when the runner got through the defensive line, his job was to be at the right place at the right time and knock the guy’s head off. That’s kind of the way he works.”

Just ask Carol Liu, chair of the state Assembly’s Committee on Higher Education, who ran smack into Charlie Reed last summer. Reed had arrived one afternoon at his second home in North Carolina for some rest and relaxation with his wife, only to turn around and head straight back to California at five o’clock the next morning when he heard that a key legislative bill might die in Liu’s committee. “I’d never, never forgive myself if I’d have stayed there and lost it,” said Reed.

The bill authorized Cal State to offer independent doctoral degrees for the first time, in audiology (Au.D.) and education (Ed.D.). That was highly controversial, because California’s 45-year-old Master Plan for Higher Education reserved the right to offer doctoral degrees for the more selective, research-oriented University of California system. Cal State is meant to

focus on providing undergraduate education to the top one-third of the state’s high school graduates; it also offers master’s degrees. The bill was staunchly opposed by UC, which already had joint Ed.D. and Au.D. programs with Cal State, and by Liu, who also chairs the advisory committee for the School of Education at UC Berkeley.

But at the eleventh hour, Reed persuaded UC President Robert Dynes to remove his opposition to the bill if it was limited to the Ed.D. and did not include the Au.D. That was part of a calculated strategy on Reed’s part. “The idea was to get as much as we could, but we said if we have to give up something, we’ll give up the Au.D.,” he said.

“I don’t think of it as a horse trade so much as the best way to go about it,” Dynes explained. “And once we got our egos out of the way, we both came to the same conclusion,” he said: that it made sense for Cal State to offer the Ed.D., but that UC, with its medical facilities and health care expertise, should continue to partner with Cal State for the audiology degree.

After an intense lobbying effort orchestrated by Reed and the bill’s sponsor, state Senator Jack Scott, chair of the Senate Committee on Education, it passed out of Liu’s committee on a 5-2 vote. “I expected it to be a very hard fight. And it was a very hard fight,” said Scott, who was subsequently named one of two “legislators of the year” by Cal State. Later, much to Scott’s delight, the entire Assembly and the Senate approved it by overwhelming margins. “[Reed] knows how to get things done politically,” said Scott, who, like Reed, is a veteran of both politics and higher education (he served as president of two community colleges). “He’s quite indefatigable in the pursuit of things.”

People who know him say the deal was quintessential Charlie Reed.

“The average college administrator, the best you can get is Poly Sci 101,” said Assemblyman Dymally. As chair of the Assembly’s Budget Subcommittee on Education Finance, he has been impressed by Reed’s accessibility, responsiveness and savvy. “But he’s Poly Sci Pragmatic 101.”

“He’s a consummate politician,” said California Secretary of Education Alan Bersin, who also counts himself among Reed’s many fans. “Even when you end up being in a big dispute with him, he’s a good competitor. He could persuade you that something was in your interests even when you didn’t think so originally.”

That was not the case with Carol Liu. She still believes that the bill was a mistake, and that the new degree will suck precious resources from Cal State’s undergraduate programs. “This is an end run by Charlie Reed to get around the Master Plan,” said Liu, who saw herself as its protector and was peeved that the UC administration abandoned the fight. “It’s the camel’s nose under the tent.”

Exactly, said Reed, adding that it’s about time the Master Plan was revisited. After all, he noted dryly, “The U.S. Constitution has been changed a few times, too.” He is happy to leave the Ph.D. programs to the University of California system, but he hopes Cal State’s Ed.D. program will lead to approval of more Cal State applied doc-



**California Assemblywoman Carol Liu failed in an attempt to keep Cal State from offering doctoral degrees.**

toral degrees. “That’s going to change the character of Cal State,” he said, by adding prestige and name recognition to the institution. (It could use some: When Reed introduces himself as chancellor of Cal State, people often assume he means the University of California.)

So was it a win, a loss or a draw for Cal State? “We won,” Reed declared without hesitation. “Absolutely.”

And winning, to Charlie Reed, means scoring one for the students. That is why Reed was at the state capitol in May, lobbying alongside students, presidents and other Cal State officials for a financial aid bill that Cal State and the California State Student Association had co-sponsored. “I think he works hard for the students and really tries to do what’s best for the institution,” said Jennifer Reimer, CSSA chair for the past year, explaining why the CSSA gave Reed its most recent Administrator of the Year award.

Reed is equally popular with the university system’s presidents, who say he is a leader they can trust. Yes, he’s brusque. Yes, he’s impatient. Yes, he’s demanding. But, they say, he’s also honest, reliable and open to hearing their ideas. Ruben Armiñana, president of Sonoma State University, calls him “a pussycat with a really loud meow.”

Paul Zingg, president of Cal State Chico (also known as Chico State) uses a different animal analogy to describe Reed. “He’s something of a bull in a china closet,” Zingg said. “But I mean that positively. You know he’s in the room. And that’s good: to have folks be aware when Cal State is in the room. Charlie’s been very effective in announcing our presence and tying our presence to the agenda for the state of California.”

Reed does not receive such high marks from some Cal State faculty and the Cal State unions. But the days of faculty picketers and votes of no confidence—in Reed’s first year on the job, they were passed by more than a dozen campus faculties, incensed over what they perceived as his disrespect for them—are long gone.

Still, there’s no love lost between the Cal

**continued on page 7**

ROD SEARCEY FOR CROSSTALK



## FAIRTEST

from page 1

the errors of the College Board may seem ironic but, in fact, it is emblematic of the group's history. From its start in 1986, FairTest has played the role of outsider in the clubby, often opaque world of standardized testing. It has specialized in pricking the reputations of the College Board and other institutions, arguing that their much-feared tests are often faulty by design and, more often than not, fail in their primary mission of predicting student success.

Upstairs, in the remaining office, Schaeffer said the reprieve has given FairTest the chance to continue offering its contrarian services. "There's always been certain groups who have been attracted to us because we offer the other side of the story," he said. "If you want a non-industry,

***"There is stronger public oversight and control over the food we feed our pets than for the tests administered to our children."***

**—ROBERT SCHAEFFER,  
OF FAIRTEST**

non-establishment view of the testing industry, we can provide it. Frankly, there's no one else who can do that."

Over the years FairTest and its allies have made notable gains in their struggle with the industry. The testing process now is more open, and industry research is available to the public. Test questions contain less bias. And the SAT and its mid-western rival, the ACT, have been stripped of some of their fearful power by the acknowledgement of test makers that test

scores are not immutable but can be altered through coaching.

Throughout, FairTest has proved difficult to ignore because of its aggressiveness and in-your-face style. When the group announced its founding in 1986, for example, it did so at the College Board's biggest event of the year, the College Board Forum, where it proceeded to lambaste the SAT for various alleged biases against minorities and low-income groups.

And just recently, when Schaeffer appeared opposite Gasper Caperton, president of the College Board, at a New York state hearing on the SAT scoring scandal, Schaeffer told legislators that the breakdown in scoring proceeded from the fact that the testing industry "has no enforceable quality control standards and lacks basic accountability to students, teachers and the public.

"The truth is, there is stronger public oversight and control over the food we feed our pets than for the tests administered to our children."

This approach, essentially political, does not mesh easily with the academic style of the psychometricians and administrators of the testing industry, and it has not won FairTest many fans within that world. Several prominent members of the industry, in fact, refused to comment on FairTest for this story.

One such leader, Kurt M. Landgraf, president of the Educational Testing Service, not only declined to comment himself but had an ETS spokesman convey the message that the entire organization would remain mute on the subject.

Wayne Camara, vice president for research at the College Board, was one of the few willing to discuss the group. After expressing his support for several of FairTest's positions on standardized testing, Camara then ripped into their brash approach, particularly the recent comment comparing the SAT to pet food.

"That's a great sound bite," he said. "But what does it mean? It's not like we're manufacturing pet food, where you open up a can and test it for the nutrients. I mean, it's a spurious issue. What regulatory body was going to catch the scoring error? Would this (regulatory) agency watch them scoring the test, overseeing what they are doing?"

In actuality, FairTest's approach is more or less the classic strategy of underdogs in the world of public policy. Snappy language and sound bites are used by small players to attract attention when they are hopelessly outgunned by larger rivals. With FairTest, the brashness has given the group an influence far larger than its tiny size and budget would suggest.

That influence extends to college admissions officers and high school guidance counselors around the country where FairTest's arguments are widely known and often supported. In many such offices the decades-long willingness to accept SAT or ACT scores as holy writ has been broken, probably forever. And in its place, a more complex system of assessing stu-



TODD ANDERSON, BLACK STAR, FOR CROSSTALK

***Every year, more colleges and universities make SAT and ACT scores optional for some or all applicants, says Robert Schaeffer, FairTest's national education director.***

dents has arisen.

The most vivid evidence of this change can be seen on the FairTest website (FairTest.org), which now lists more than 730 colleges and universities around the country that allow some or all applicants to forgo submitting test scores for admission. Some institutions allow all students to apply without test scores, and base their review on high school grades, portfolios of student work, personal interviews and other material. Other colleges allow test scores to be omitted only if students have achieved grade point averages of a certain level or higher.

The 730 institutions on the list include a wide spectrum ranging from state universities to elite private schools. No Ivy League schools have gone test-optional, but, according to FairTest, the list now includes 25 of the top 100 liberal arts colleges in the *U.S. News and World Report* rankings.

Actually, FairTest did not originate the test-optional movement. That role falls to Bates College in Maine, which took its action a year before FairTest was founded. But FairTest has tirelessly promoted the idea that students and colleges are better served when admissions officers employ an array of assessment measures rather than relying on test scores as a principal guide.

"FairTest has acted as a bully pulpit for test-optional," said William Hiss, Bates' vice president for external affairs, who served as its admissions officer when the college made its original decision. "They have also acted as a visible presence for a broad movement that questions the values of standardized tests and the way they are used in America. I think that amounts to a valuable service."

While Bates and FairTest both say they have kept an arms-length relationship, the Bates experience nonetheless has proven invaluable to FairTest's argument that standardized tests have dubious value in predicting the success of college students.

The results of the Bates program have been documented over the 21 years of its existence, and some of the results have proved startling. Bates has found, for example, that students who did not submit test scores, known as "non-submitters," maintained GPAs that were virtually the

same as submitters. The graduation rates of non-submitters were also virtually the same as submitters.

Those results are all the more salient because Bates is a highly selective college, and test-submitting freshman have high average test scores. So the non-submitters at Bates compete with high-end SAT scorers, and differences in outcomes still are hard to detect.

Hiss said Bates' experience has converted him and other college officials to the theory of multiple intelligences advanced by Harvard educator Howard Gardner. No single test can measure the different forms of intelligence, talents and skills in young people, Hiss said, and such a test inevitably will cut out some promising students whose skills do not appear on the test results. Such a process, he said, raises grave questions for colleges and the country as a whole.

For one thing, he argues that rejecting students who would otherwise thrive in

***FairTest's brashness has given the group an influence far larger than its tiny size and budget would suggest.***

college can have crippling impacts on their lives, possibly pushing them from college altogether and leaving them with career choices that are far below their real talents.

And further, he said, the whole nation suffers. "When you use a test that artificially reduces the pool of people who could go to college and succeed, you are truncating the number of educated people available for higher-level jobs. That is terrible economic policy," said Hiss.

In Cambridge, Schaeffer says FairTest now receives several phone calls a month from one college or another asking about the process of going test-optional. In the last three years the list has grown by more than 200 schools.

"We expect to see the growth (of the list) accelerate," said Schaeffer. "In fact,

***continued next page***

M. MALONEY, BLACK STAR, FOR CROSSTALK



***Laura Barrett, FairTest's board chairman, thinks college applicants should be judged on their overall performance, not just on test scores.***



**from preceding page**

the question now gets raised as to whether we are reaching a tipping point where the numbers start to mushroom.”

The implication of the test-optional movement—that the SAT and ACT are expendable—has clearly hit a sensitive nerve within the industry, and there has been at least one attempt to erode its significance.

In 2002, the College Board assigned two researchers to conduct a study of FairTest’s list of test-optional schools which concluded that FairTest had skewed the list, exaggerating its size.

At the time, the list contained 390 schools. The College Board claimed that 52 of the institutions on the list did not belong on the list because, in fact, they required admissions tests for all students. “Clearly, the FairTest list...is misleading,” the study said, and later concluded, “It is imperative that the number of SAT/ACT-optional institutions not be overestimated.”

But FairTest officials say it was the College Board study, not their list, that contained the error. “There were no 52 colleges that didn’t belong on the list,” said Schaeffer. “We review the list all the time, and we are vigilant about pulling off any colleges that get placed there by mistake. I’m not saying they fabricated their list, because I don’t know how or why the mistake was made, but their claim just wasn’t true.”

Schaeffer’s complaint appears to have some justification. The names of the 52 institutions were not supplied by the study, but the College Board made them available to *National Crosstalk* after a request. A random spot check of five colleges on the list revealed that all five have test-optional programs in one form or another, and all five had them at the time of the study.

When FairTest rented its first office just off Harvard Square in 1986, its future

impact on the education world would have been hard to predict. Among other things, it was the product of a political odd couple who shared almost nothing except a deep suspicion of standardized testing of all kinds.

John Weiss, a college drop-out and left-leaning political operative, had first become involved in the test reform movement in the late 1970s, when he worked for Massachusetts Congressman Michael Harrington. Those reform efforts eventually fizzled and Weiss repaired to Maine to work in community organizing.

Weiss was still in Maine when, one day, he was approached by a private detective. The detective told him he had been sent by a man named J. Patrick Rooney who wanted to talk about standardized test reform. The detective gave him Rooney’s phone number.

“Rooney and I talked and at first I said I wasn’t interested. I didn’t want to start a new organization. I was burned out, that’s why I went to Maine,” said Weiss, who is now publisher of the *Colorado Springs Independent*, an alternative weekly, and a member of FairTest’s board. “Then I got curious and asked how much money was available. Rooney said \$750,000. Well, that was a lot of money back then. So I thought for a minute and said, maybe I am interested.”

Rooney, it turned out, was the founder of the Golden Rule Insurance Co. of Indianapolis, a wealthy man and politically eccentric conservative who also had championed civil rights throughout his life. Rooney’s company aimed many of its products at blacks in the midwest, and his interest in standardized testing was piqued when he discovered that white insurance salesmen were passing the licensing exam in Illinois in large numbers but black salesmen were not.

The exam infuriated Rooney. “In my judgement the (Illinois) testing was used for discrimination purposes,” he said. “The construction of the questions had a disparate impact on minority people, and I believe it was intended.”

Rooney sued Illinois and the Educational Testing Service, which provided the tests for the state. The result, which is still known as the “Golden Rule Settlement,” committed the state and ETS to reform the way questions are formulated for its licensing tests.

When Rooney called Weiss, his objective was to expand the reforms he had won in the lawsuit to cover all types of standardized tests, from college admissions to K-12 and employment testing. It was an ambitious plan. At one early point, after Weiss had recruited Schaeffer to join him, the two constructed a back-of-the-envelope organization chart that showed they would need a staff of nine to advance their cause on all three fronts.

They never quite made it. Rooney contributed several million dollars to FairTest’s operations over a five-year period, and he was followed by grants from the Ford, Joyce and McIntosh Foundations. The group hit its high-water mark in the late ’90s when the staff grew to seven persons occupying two floors of the current office building.

Laura Barrett, FairTest’s board chair-



CURT KELLER, BLACK STAR, FOR CROSSTALK

**Indianapolis businessman J. Patrick Rooney contributed several million dollars to FairTest in its early years.**

man, said that, even then, the struggle with the large test makers was hardly a battle of equals. “On one side you have these very large institutions that make a lot of money from testing. And they spend it on promoting their products. On the other side you have this small organization that represents the constituency of people who have concerns with testing, but nobody makes money from that. So it’s been tough.”

Soon it would get tougher yet. By fall 2005 all three of the supporting foundations had dropped their support and FairTest was surviving on crumbs. Several members

***In many admissions offices the decades-long willingness to accept SAT or ACT scores as holy writ has been broken, probably forever.***

of the board made personal donations that allowed them to keep the doors open temporarily, and it was decided to give Neill and Schaeffer several months to generate some backing.

No one is certain why the foundation support dried up but Neill believes part of the reason lies with George Bush’s No Child Left Behind legislation that mandates K-12 testing across the country.

“It’s affected the foundations in the sense that they perceive there’s a national consensus about No Child Left Behind and that more K-12 testing is inevitable,” Neill said. “They see Ted Kennedy and George Bush in alliance on this, and they’re asking themselves why they should fund this small group (FairTest) that’s saying no, no, it’s not going to work, it’s bad news.”

The FairTest leaders also acknowledge a more difficult truth: their group is well-known for what it stands against—standardized testing in most of its forms—but less well known for what it supports.

Diane Ravitch, education professor at New York University and senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, said she agrees that standardized tests have their issues but that FairTest has never met a test it liked. “In my experience, FairTest is opposed to all standardized tests,” she wrote in an email. “I don’t know of any that they think is ‘fair.’”

This view, not rare in the education world, may also have hurt the group in terms of foundation funding. Foundations often prefer to fund organizations that pursue a benign course toward their goal. FairTest, in the words of one critic, may present to the foundations as “too edgy, too negative.”

But, in fact, FairTest has long promoted its own view of the way student assessment should work. That approach—whether applied to college admissions or the K-12 arena—resembles the “portfolio” method used at some colleges, whereby students present a multi-layered profile of their high school careers both inside the school and out.

FairTest would have K-12 teachers evaluate students individually for their proficiency in various subjects, and the portfolios would include samples of essays, projects and other work that revealed their talents or deficiencies.

Though any individual evaluation would involve some subjectivity, Neill says, the evaluation of an entire school of students under this system would prove far more reliable and revealing than the single multiple-choice test now used by many school districts.

Barrett, who once served as executive director of the group, says this type of student assessment has been tried successfully by a few districts but the effort has not drawn much attention. “It’s hard to explain, it’s complicated and you can’t reduce it to a number,” she said.

At least one member of the FairTest board argues that the rap about negativity is a red herring and the group should not apologize for playing the role of critic. Deborah Meier, a founder of progressive

PETER FINGER, BLACK STAR, FOR CROSSTALK



**Educator Deborah Meier says FairTest can “keep the testing companies honest—there’s no one else who does that.”**



schools in New York and Boston and a former MacArthur Fellow, said, “I’d think that the foundations would want to keep FairTest around just to keep the testing companies honest. There’s no one else who does that. The testing companies operate in a world of secrecy, and they have this power over people’s lives. We need a counter-weight organization that opens up the process and tells us the other side of the story.”

Bob Laird, former undergraduate

***FairTest has tirelessly promoted the idea that students and colleges are better served when admissions officers employ an array of assessment measures rather than relying on test scores.***

admissions director at the University of California, Berkeley, says that FairTest’s role as counter-weight also has been valuable in college admissions offices. “The College Board is very skilled at building a web of relationships with deans, admissions officers and college presidents,” he said. “They are never so direct as to say, ‘We are inviting you to a conference at the Toronto

Four Seasons, and then we expect you to use our products,’ but the connection nonetheless gets made.

“FairTest is valuable because they are addressing the other end of that equation. They face a Sisyphean task in many ways, but they are making gains.”

And what of the future? Camara, the research vice president at the College Board, predicts that the movement to diminish the role of the SAT and ACT will be limited by the realities of the admissions process, especially at large schools.

Camara told the story of a visit he paid several years ago to the admissions office at UCLA. That year, he said, UCLA had approximately 4,500 spaces in its upcoming freshman class and had received more than 40,000 applications. Of those, about 10,000 applicants had high school GPAs of 4.0 or higher.

“So UCLA was looking at 2.5 applicants with 4.0s for every available spot,” Camara said. “In a situation like that, how are you going to make the decision about who gets in? Do you flip a coin? Or do you use the SAT or ACT?”

Laird is not so sure that the tests would be the best way to solve that dilemma. When the UCLA story was described to him, he laughed. “At Berkeley we had years where our situation was more extreme than UCLA’s. But I’d say, yes, you certainly could make the decision without the SAT.

“You look at each applicant, not just in terms of their numbers, but in terms of

their range of accomplishments and the environment they come from. What course load did they take? What was their high school like? What kind of community did they come from? You can get a comprehensive picture of what the kid achieved versus what was available to him or her. That’s what we did at Berkeley, and it worked extremely well.”

For Laird, the growing perception of the limited usefulness of the SAT suggests that its greatest days might have passed. “I think the College Board is probably preparing for the day when the SAT is no longer its most profitable vehicle,” he said.

As for the future of FairTest, prospects have improved, but a return to flush times is far from guaranteed. The group received several small grants this spring, and the influx of private donations means that the present, scaled-down operation can continue into next year.

But Neill and Schaeffer would like to see the organization return to its former size of seven or so staff members. “I feel like we’ve moved out of critical care and now we’re ready for rehabilitation,” said Schaeffer.

That will require a several-year commitment from a foundation or private patron. The group’s request for funding is now being considered by several foundations, and decisions are expected within several months.

There is another issue that faces FairTest. Both Neill and Schaeffer have worked at testing reform for decades now.



***Students who do not submit test scores do as well at Bates College as those who do, says William Hiss, vice president for external affairs.***

Their hair has turned gray during their tenure, and their years remaining at the helm likely are not long.

So who will pick up the cudgels when they have left?

Schaeffer laughs at the question. “We had a great pool of talented young people. The only problem is, we had to lay them off. Maybe we should try and find out where they went.” ♦

*Robert A. Jones is a former reporter and columnist at the Los Angeles Times.*

## REED

from page 4

State administration and the faculty, who feel they are overworked and underpaid. “Certainly there’s a lot of faculty anger over the salary and workload situation,” said Ted Anagnoson, immediate past vice chair of the Statewide Academic Senate and a professor of political science at Cal State Los Angeles. “Probably too much of it is directed at the Board of Trustees and Charlie. Probably it ought to be directed more at the state.”

In the coming academic year, Cal State officials say, average faculty salaries are projected to lag 18 percent behind those at comparable institutions, more than 26 per-

cent for full professors. That is in large part due to the hit Cal State took during California’s budget crisis: between 2002 and 2005, the Cal State budget was slashed by \$522 million, about 12.5 percent of its current \$4 billion budget.

At the behest of California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Reed and UC President Dynes negotiated a six-year higher education compact that provided an additional \$218 million to Cal State this year, but that only covered a 2.5 percent increase in enrollment and a 3.5 percent increase in salaries, the first in three years. The compact also provides for continued funding for the projected 2.5 percent annual enrollment growth, as well as steady increases in base funding of three percent next year, four percent the following year and five percent during the last three years of the agreement.

Some legislators were miffed that they weren’t included in the compact negotiations, and thought Reed and Dynes might have done better. But Reed defended the compact as fair. And California Secretary of Education Bersin praised it as politically pragmatic, given the state’s dire fiscal situation at the time. “Charlie’s been around the block enough to know that pigs get fed and hogs get slaughtered,” Bersin said. Translation: You won’t survive long if you try to grab more than your share.

But now that the state’s economy is improving, union leadership has been critical of Reed for failing to advocate for additional funding. “Initially they said it would just be a floor,” said John Travis, professor of government at Humboldt State University and Cal State Faculty Association pres-

ident. “They have treated it as a ceiling. They do not ask for anything more than the compact, and we believe that is just not enough.”

Travis doesn’t have many kind words to say about Reed, whom he criticized for not

***Under Reed’s leadership, Cal State has garnered national attention for innovative programs designed to help students prepare for college.***

listening to the faculty, and for raising annual tuition and fees. “It’s always been kind of surprising to us that he distrusts the advice that comes from the people who are doing the business of the university,” he said.

But even Travis acknowledged that Reed isn’t completely to blame for what he characterized as the union’s “dysfunctional relationship” with the administration. “This predates Charlie. It’s always been very difficult to bargain with the administration.” And he said he was pleased that Reed recently hired a consultant to help improve his relationships with Cal State employee unions. “I think all of the labor unions see this as a positive development. It’s a recognition of a problem,” said Travis.

Reed, for his part, said he thinks the relationship has already improved somewhat; he also has said that he recognizes the need to close the salary gaps lest they jeopardize the future quality of Cal State. And

in fact, the Cal State Board of Trustees has approved a five-year plan that begins to address the issue.

But Reed said that the union leadership is not grounded in fiscal reality. “They think there’s some money machine somewhere,” he said, with exasperation.

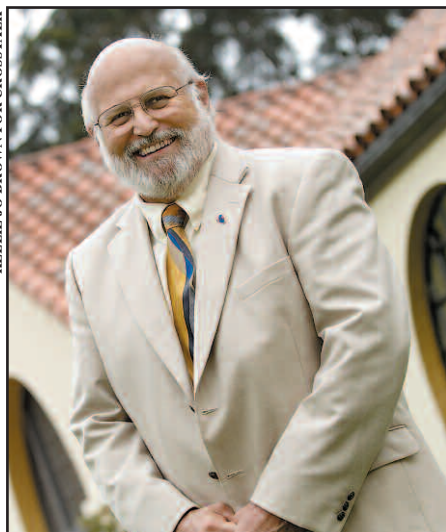
Reed doesn’t have a money machine, but he has told his presidents they must raise more funds from the private sector, which he says has been largely untapped by Cal State. “California has so much wealth compared to most other states,” said Reed. “And we have to figure out how to access that wealth.”

Meanwhile, he believes student tuition and fees should continue to increase ten percent a year until students are picking up 25 percent of the total cost of their education. Currently, he said, tuition accounts for about 23 percent. Even with substantial tuition hikes over the past few years, the \$3,164 average annual cost of attending Cal State remains far below the national average cost of attending a public four-year institution, which this year was \$5,491.

Reed could not say how much longer he would remain at the helm of Cal State. But he clearly is in no hurry to step down. Because California is ten to 15 years ahead of the rest of the country in terms of population trends, he believes that Cal State can serve as a national model. And he wants to make it a good one.

Besides, said Reed, “I think I would die if I didn’t go to work.” ♦

*Kathy Witkowski is a freelance reporter in Missoula, Montana, and a frequent contributor to National Public Radio.*



***John Travis, president of the Cal State Faculty Association, says Chancellor Reed largely ignores advice from faculty members.***



# A Lefty Under Every Lectern

## Conservative crusader David Horowitz pushes his "Academic Bill of Rights"

By Susan C. Thomson

**F**RESH FROM A NUMBER of self-proclaimed victories, conservative culture warrior David Horowitz and his troops are massing for what is shaping up as their broadest attack yet in his campaign to, as he likes to put it, "take politics out of college classrooms." Their battle flag is an "Academic Bill of Rights" Horowitz drafted as an antidote to what he disparages as the pervasive political indoctrination of college students by leftist professors.

For a text, the legions have Horowitz's

*For three years now, conservative culture warrior David Horowitz has been on a higher-education offensive.*

latest book, "The Professors: The 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America," published in February. A collection of mini-profiles of, as Horowitz broad brushes them, a rogues gallery of faculty quacks on the far left, it's a sharp-shooting, sure-fire attention-getter.

As Horowitz himself says, getting attention is what this crusade of his is all about. And doing that is a skill he has personally honed to perfection in almost five decades as something of a professional—and mercurial—political polemicist. Though short of stature, he is long on fervor, quick with words, avid for the limelight, impossible to ignore.

For three years now, Horowitz has been on his higher-education offensive, advocating his "bill of rights" in campus speeches, testimony to state legislatures and personal appeals to college administrators.

In its broadest strokes, Horowitz's Academic Bill of Rights is vanilla-bland and easy to swallow. It calls for classrooms free of all indoctrination and for ideological impartiality in the hiring, firing and promotion of faculty members, and in the grading and disciplining of students. But what amounts to the bill's fine print sends fearful shivers down the spines of some academics, who see there threats to their own freedom, even the specter of a new kind of McCarthyism.

It calls for:

- Curricula and reading lists in the humanities and social sciences that reflect not just their professors' personal viewpoints.
- Speakers, programs and other student activities that "promote intellectual pluralism."
- Intolerance for obstruction of outside speakers and destruction of campus literature.
- Institutional neutrality in areas where scholars in the same field disagree.

In late 2003, when the ink was barely dry on the bill, the American Association of University Professors went on record as supporting the "non-indoctrination principle" but taking vehement exception to other features the association said could pose "a grave threat" to traditional academic freedom by leading to quantitative standards for political diversity, requirements to teach discredited theories, and intrusions on faculty autonomy by courts, administrators and legislatures.

Now, as a dedicated and watchful foe, the AAUP keeps tabs on state legislatures, where Horowitz's bill has found some of its most enthusiastic recruits. According to the AAUP's running tally, lawmakers in 17 states have advanced various versions of the Academic Bill of Rights. None has yet made it into law, and only the Georgia Senate two years ago went so far as to actually pass something like it, though considerably watered-down.

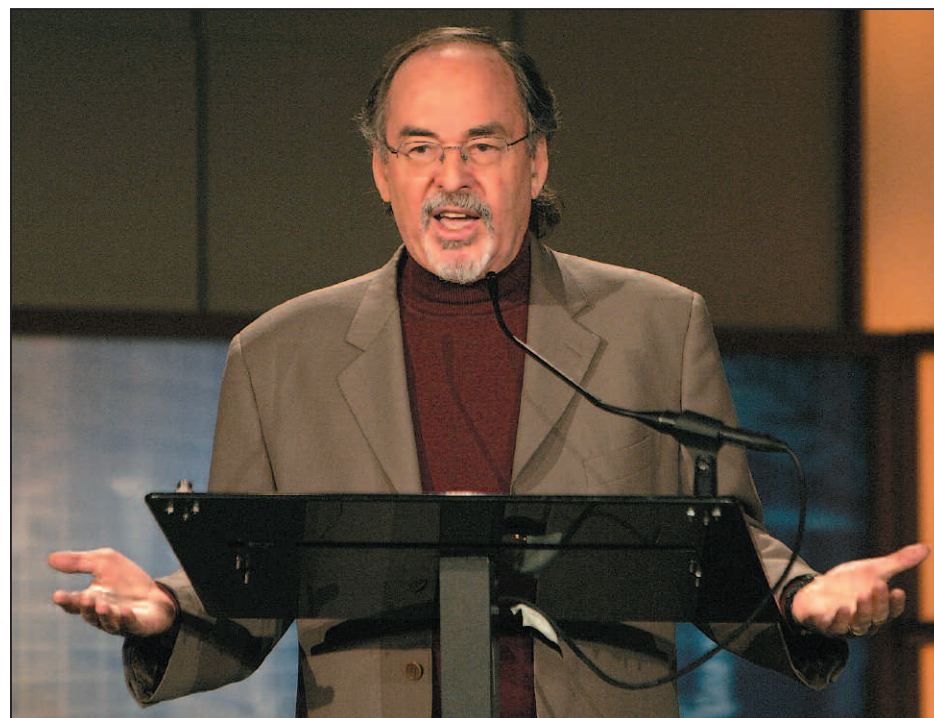
Last year, however, under threat of legislation, higher education leaders in Ohio and Colorado agreed to some of the bill's more palatable points. Horowitz claimed victory in both states and in Pennsylvania, where the General Assembly established a special committee that held hearings on the political environments for teaching and learning in the state's public colleges and universities—the most extensive public airings so far on Horowitz's issues. The committee has yet to produce its report.

The Academic Bill of Rights has also found favor at the federal level, notably with U.S. Representative Jack Kingston. In 2003 the Georgia Republican floated a "sense of the Congress" resolution featuring the bill's language almost word for word. The resolution didn't succeed, but similar wording found its way into early proposals for the House version of the higher education reauthorization bill.

The softer final version, merely endorsing campus free speech and students' rights to express their beliefs without fear of reprisal, resulted, in part, from behind-the-scenes lobbying by the American Council on Education, the chief advocacy organization for the nation's colleges and universities.

Those generalities are consistent with ACE's "Statement on Academic Rights and Responsibilities," published last year in obvious, though indirect, response to Horowitz and his "bill of rights." It proclaims, "Neither students nor faculty should be disadvantaged or evaluated on the basis of their political opinions." The document also defends "intellectual pluralism and academic freedom" and "the free exchange of ideas" on campus while insisting that not all ideas "have equal merit" and that government should respect colleges' and universities' need for autonomy on academic matters.

A more direct criticism of Horowitz came from Jamie Horwitz, spokesman for the American Federation of Teachers: "We think his writings and a lot of his remarks



PHOTOS BY DENNIS BRACK, BLACK STAR, FOR CROSSTALK

*David Horowitz contends that many faculty members at U.S. colleges and universities try to indoctrinate students with left-wing views.*

have been filled with mischaracterizations and outright deceptions."

Thirty higher education organizations—among them, the American Dental Education Association, the College Board, the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities and the National Collegiate Athletic Association—signed the milder American Council on Education statement.

Terry W. Hartle, ACE's senior vice president for government and public affairs, said that the general endorsement of free speech on campus and of students' rights to express their beliefs without fear of reprisal is "a satisfactory solution to a complicated problem." But, he acknowledged, "There are still some people in the higher education community who are unhappy with our supposedly giving David Horowitz legitimacy. He is legitimate. David Horowitz is taken very seriously by higher education officials around the country."

And he's not going away. When asked to detail his immediate plans, though, he declined. "I don't really want to telegraph, because my opposition is so well funded, where I'm going to pop up next," he said.

Horowitz insists that legislation isn't his main objective. At the same time, however,



*Terry Hartle, senior vice president at the American Council on Education, says Horowitz "is taken very seriously" by many higher education officials.*

Brad Shipp, field director for a Horowitz-sponsored organization called Students for Academic Freedom that claims chapters or contacts on more than 180 campuses, said, "Any time a legislator contacts us, we will assist them in any manner they want... We'll support legislation if it has to come to that."

Students from the SAF chapter at Florida State University testified for a proposed Academic Bill of Rights in that state last year. But, said chapter chairman Matt Sarrar, "The legislation was only meant to open the eyes of the universities all across the state." He sees the organization's emphasis as shifting now from the legislatures to the campuses themselves. "The future of this is going to be dealing with individual universities," he said, with an emphasis on "helping them develop a grievance process" for conservative students who believe they have been wronged by leftist professors.

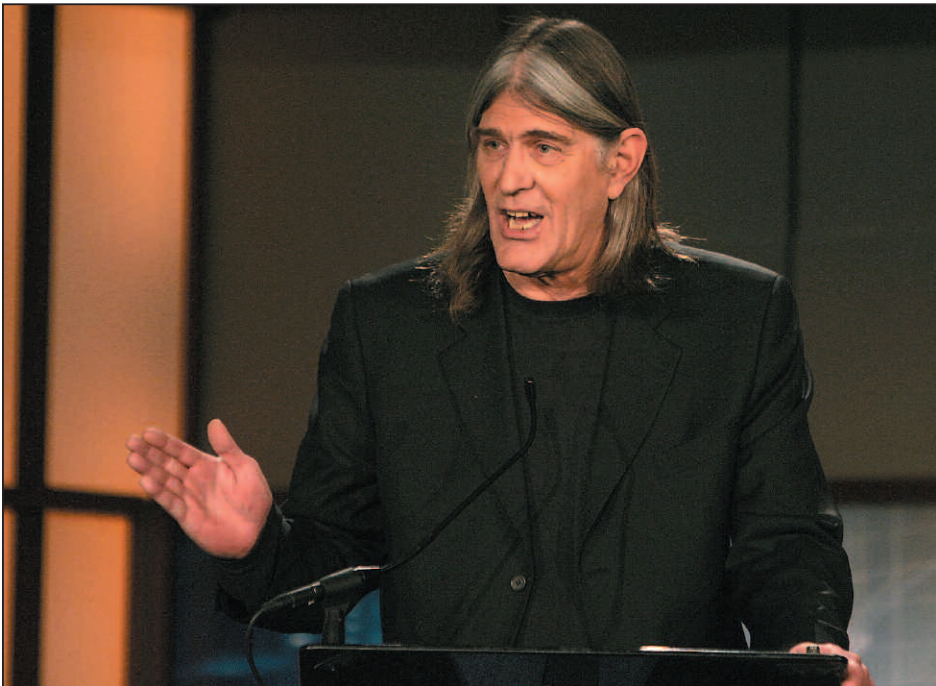
As that process stands at Florida State now, Sarrar said, only individuals can file grievances, and his group of between 50 and 65 members has been unable to intercede for students who claim professors have invited them to drop courses or threatened them with failing grades or expulsion from class for their conservative views.

SAF's national office encourages all campus chapters to report incidents of alleged abuses and collects them in a "complaint center" on its website (studentsforacademicfreedom.org). Also posted there—under SAF's logo, which features three monkeys in academic gowns and hear-no-evil, see-no-evil and speak-no-evil poses—is a copy of the organization's student handbook, detailing how to start and organize a chapter, collect and document complaints and get publicity.

The organization's goals include, according to the handbook, persuading universities to adopt the Academic Bill of Rights as policy, and getting student governments to pass resolutions supporting a Student Bill of Rights, Horowitz's rewriting of his academic bill from a student perspective.

Horowitz said one of his immediate





**Ward Churchill, an ethnic studies professor at the University of Colorado who is notorious for calling victims of the September 2001 attacks “little Eichmanns,” debated Horowitz in Washington, D.C., in April.**

goals is to put the student bill “in the hands of students” so that they are aware of “their rights to a professional non-political education.” According to SAF’s national office, campus chapters have yet to succeed with a single university but have scored with at least a dozen student governments.

On some campuses, chapters of College Republicans have led the charge. This was the case in April at Princeton University, where undergraduates approved the Student Bill of Rights, with 51.8 percent in favor. Horowitz described the surprise result as an “historic victory” for his principles.

Students for Academic Freedom has chapters on both public and private cam-

***In his latest book, Horowitz argues that college faculties are infested with leftover 1960s lefties who went to graduate school to avoid the Vietnam draft.***

puses, but the issues they and Horowitz raise loom largest and most menacingly for the public ones. That’s because they get public money, said Shipp. “When you have a taxpayer-funded institution that is allowing its employees the ability to discriminate against students there for any reason, their political ideology or religious beliefs, you have a real problem.”

Horowitz casts the potential consequences in economic terms. “The greatest threat to state funding (of public universities) is the one-sided political domination of the left” on campus, he said. And yet, he claims that, rather than being out for any professors’ jobs, he wants only to expand political dialogue on campus and stop classroom proselytizing. Whether that’s of the right or left, “I couldn’t care less,” he said.

This is a rare protestation of neutrality

from a man whose personal, out-front political views have always been anything but disinterested. On most of today’s issues, Horowitz comes down hard on the right. His website, [frontpagemag.org](http://frontpagemag.org), promotes the military and the Iraq war, cautions against the threat of “global Islamism,” bashes the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations and illegal immigration, and promotes his books, including “The Professors.”

In that book, he proceeds from the premise that college faculties are infested with leftover 1960s lefties who went to graduate school to avoid the Vietnam draft and, as “tenured radicals,” now misuse their classroom lecterns as political pulpits. He goes on to offer, in biting prose, a series of three- to five-page profiles of academics he variously condemns as believers in Marxism, racial preferences, same-sex marriage, or as opponents of the PATRIOT Act, free-market capitalism, Israel, the “War on Terror,” the Iraq war or U.S. Middle Eastern policy.

Horowitz claims the 101 professors named in his book are a representative sample from colleges and universities, large and small, public and private. But nine are from Columbia University; seven teach law; and a quarter are engaged in black studies, women’s studies, peace studies, Islamic studies, “queer” studies or the like—curricular innovations of the past generation, all of which Horowitz deplores and dismisses as academically fraudulent.

As a counter to Horowitz’s academic offensive, a coalition of liberal groups—including the AAUP, the American Civil Liberties and the American Federation of Teachers—launched the organization Free Exchange on Campus, and the website [freeexchangeoncampus.org](http://freeexchangeoncampus.org), earlier this year. They argue, in a 50-page, footnoted rebuttal to “The Professors,” that the book is based on sloppy research and false premises, is full of misstatements and omissions, and that it “strongly evokes a blacklist.”

Among Horowitz’ 101 professorial piñatas, he beats longest and hardest on Ward Churchill, devoting most of his

book’s introduction to the provocative professor of ethnic studies at the University of Colorado who ignited a furor for infamously referring to the victims of the September 2001 attacks as “little Eichmanns” who deserved what they got that day. (Free Exchange does not defend Churchill.)

While the book disparages Churchill as a “scandalous figure” of “abhorrent views,” Horowitz was not above scheduling a “debate” with him and advertising it as a drawing card for what he billed as Students for Academic Freedom’s first national conference.

Students were a small minority among the 130 registrants for the two-day event at a Washington, D.C. hotel last April, but they dominated the audience for the evening debate at George Washington University.

The 260-seat auditorium was filled almost to capacity. Projected large on the back of the empty stage was the logo of Young America’s Foundation, a co-sponsor of the event and a group that, according to its website, supports ROTC, favors the rights of campus conservatives and the ideals of Ronald Reagan, and condemns racial preferences, “anti-Americanism in higher education” and “left-wing campus bias.”

The combatants entered, Horowitz stage right and Churchill stage left, a study in contrasts before they spoke a word. Horowitz, 67 and stubby to begin with, was further dwarfed by a suit jacket that hung loose and long on him. With his spectacles, trim white goatee and receding gray hair that gathers in neat, short curls at his neck, he could easily have passed for the college professor he proudly claims never to have been.

In jeans, cowboys boots and an ill-matching black T-shirt and jacket, Churchill, 58, stood tall—towering above Horowitz. His long, straight, middle-parted hair completed the image of the Native American he claims to partly be—falsely, according to his detractors, Native American groups among them.

A local talk show host, serving as moderator, lobbed the questions. First: Can politics be taken out of the classroom, and should it be?

Horowitz answered an emphatic yes, elaborating in pithy, well-practiced sound bites and making eye contact with his audience. “The very basis of a democratic education is you are taught how to think, not what to think,” he said. Churchill, gazing out over the heads before him and speaking in meandering sentences, just as emphatically disagreed. His point: Because some academic disciplines are naturally political, and professors naturally have opinions, intellectual honesty demands that they own up to them for their students.

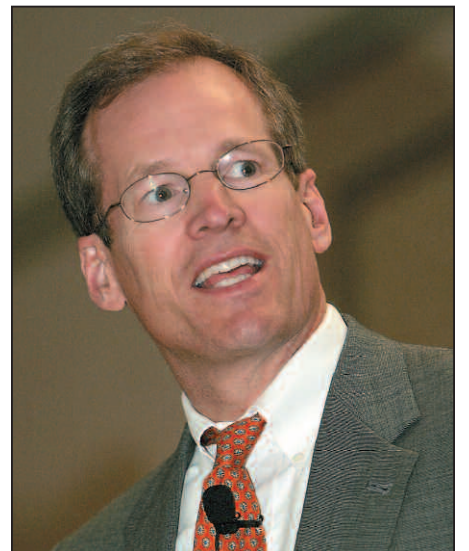
For the next hour and a half, the questions were pretty much variations on the original one. Answering, Horowitz was ebullient, Churchill dour. The tone was conversational. No sparks flew in what turned out to be less a debate than two parallel monologues. Except when Churchill accused Horowitz of “rowing with one oar” and “going in circles” in his reasoning,

the odd couple barely engaged each other. That comment drew a laugh from an audience that, judging by only occasional scattered applause, was largely indifferent to both men.

Horowitz used some of the time allotted him to sneak in a few of his favorite zingers: that college professors can make \$100,000 or more a year, get four months off and spend only six to nine hours a week in class; that education schools teach social justice, “code for socialism, or communism or redistribution of wealth”; that social work is often taught as “an indictment of the free market system”; that teachers unions encourage teachers to indoctrinate their students; that institutional racism is “a fantasy of the left.”

The debate was called off just in time for Churchill and Horowitz to prepare for a scheduled live appearance on Fox News’ “Hannity & Colmes” shout fest. With mostly the media types sticking around, the debaters squared their shoulders and stared into a bank of cameras. While they awaited their cue, somebody, as if to even up the match, handed Horowitz a box to stand on.

From the only side of the conversation onlookers could hear, it was clear that Sean Hannity was taking on Churchill and was succeeding in getting under his skin. Churchill, amid frequent, exasperated protests that Hannity kept interrupting him, seemed to be trying unsuccessfully to score points in opposition to the Iraq war. At one point he suggested that Hannity owed him an apology. The back-and-forth went on and on, leaving little time for Alan Colmes to do his number on Horowitz, who, always quick with a quip, confessed to feeling “like a potted plant” in the proceedings. When it was over, Churchill and



**U.S. Representative Jack Kingston, a Georgia Republican, introduced a “sense of the Congress” resolution incorporating some of Horowitz’ “Academic Bill of Rights,” but the resolution failed.**

Horowitz laughed and shrugged their shoulders as if to ask, “What was that all about?” And then they went their separate ways.

The conference panelists and speakers, most of them Horowitz disciples, decried, among other things, speech codes, mandatory sensitivity training and a general lack of, and respect for, conservative thought on campus. Students told stories of being

**continued on page 14**



# OTHER VOICES



## Unnecessary Barriers

### The exclusion of foreign scholars has assumed almost epidemic proportions

By Robert M. O'Neil

**W**HILE MUCH of the nation's attention was riveted on the immigration policy debate during the spring of 2006, the academic community worried about a quite different dimension of foreign access to the United States. The exclusion of visiting scholars from abroad, which had been a growing problem in the years immediately following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, had now assumed almost epidemic proportions.

A late March letter to the Secretaries of State and Education expressed the deep concern of the major higher education groups over the potential impact of such exclusion upon the international programs of America's colleges and universities. Along with a call for increased funding of foreign language and international area studies programs, the letter urged the Bush Administration to remove "unnecessary barriers to international scholars," with special attention to burdensome visa restrictions.

Evidence of apparently mounting hostility toward foreign visitors was not hard to find. In late winter, Waskar Ari, a distinguished Bolivian historian (with a Georgetown Ph.D.) who had been recruited to a faculty position at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for the fall of 2005, had waited eight months for the essential visa, unable to obtain any rationale for the delay that cost him a full academic year. Although Nebraska Chancellor Harvey Perlman insisted that he had "seen no evidence that Professor Ari represents a security risk," neither the visa nor any explanation for its denial was forthcoming. A very public protest by the American Historical Association also went unanswered.

About the same time, three scientists from India were inexplicably denied visas by the U.S. consulate in Madras, even though all had received invitations from U.S. universities, and at least one of them had been a frequent visitor to U.S. campuses. Professor Goverdhan Mehta, an organic chemist and former director of the Indian Institute of Science, was greeted by a consular official—during what he expected would be a routine

interview—with probing questions about the potential use of his research for "chemical warfare." The official accused him of "not being honest," recalled Mehta, who said that the experience left him feeling not only "very humiliated," but baffled about the basis for his exclusion.

Latin American scholars seem to have encountered special scrutiny and official disfavor. Professor Dora Maria Tellez, who once was a leading member of the Sandinista Liberation Movement in Nicaragua, but is now well established as a university professor, was denied permission to enter the United States to accept an invitation to teach at Harvard. Meanwhile, Latin American historian Miguel Tinker-Salas, a Venezuelan-born faculty member at Pomona College, found himself the wholly unexpected target of highly intrusive questions and of manifest suspicion by Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies, who entered his office without warning as he awaited students in early March.

During that very week, the State Department inexplicably denied visas to all 55 Cuban scholars who had planned to attend an international conference in Puerto Rico of the Latin American Studies Association. This was hardly the first such affront to visitors from Cuba, though it was the most sweeping. Three years earlier, an unexplained delay in granting visas to Cuban delegates bound for the same scholarly gathering kept more than half of them from attending the meeting, held that year in Dallas.

Professor Carlos Alzugaray Treto, an expert on U.S.-Cuban relations and a frequent lecturer at American campuses (including Harvard and Johns Hopkins), was denied the visa that would have enabled him to deliver a keynote address at the Latin American Studies Association annual meeting. That same spring, a Miami University geographer who had planned the weeklong return visit of a Cuban scholar to his campus lamented the denial of a visa to his putative guest, noting that the exclusion of such colleagues represented a "disturbing sign of the many impacts of the 'war on terror.'"

Of all such exclusions, by far the most visible and contentious involves Islamic scholar

Tariq Ramadan. In the summer of 2004, when he was based in Geneva, Ramadan had been offered, and had accepted, the Henry Luce Professorship in the Joan Kroc Institute at the University of Notre Dame. His furniture had already been sent to South Bend, Indiana, and his children were enrolled in school there for the fall.

Having been a frequent visitor to the United States, and a popular lecturer at Harvard, Dartmouth, Princeton and other campuses in recent years, Ramadan assumed that his permanent entry this time would be routine, and that he could plan on taking up his new academic post in the fall semester.

Barely a week before his planned departure from Geneva, however, Professor Ramadan was informed by a U.S. Embassy official that his visa had been revoked. Both he and Notre Dame sought an explanation for this extraordinary action. They were told only that the revocation reflected concerns under a section of the USA PATRIOT Act that barred foreigners who had used "a position of prominence within any country to endorse or espouse terrorist activity." Although Ramadan's grandfather had apparently been a founder of an organization that some considered to have preached terrorist rhetoric, nothing in his own academic career or his published writings or teachings could be deemed to cross the suspect line.

Protests from U.S. academic groups—notably a letter from the American Association of University Professors to the Secretaries of State and Homeland Security—were consistently ignored. Persistent and probing inquiries by the *Chicago Tribune*—which had taken up Ramadan's cause—also produced no satisfaction. Editorially, the *Tribune* observed that the Henry Luce chair at Notre Dame was hardly a place where one would expect to find a dangerous terrorist.

By mid-December 2004, Ramadan and the university had essentially abandoned hope for any redress. As soon as Ramadan resigned the position he had planned to assume, Homeland Security responded with unaccustomed alacrity, declaring the matter to be moot by reason of the resignation. As a far less appealing alternative, he instead took a nontenured teaching post at Oxford. Meanwhile, many U.S. institutions and academic organizations invited him to speak and, hoping he might be able to accept, he renewed the visa application in the fall of 2005.

When no action or official response followed, the American Civil Liberties Union filed suit in January 2006 on behalf of Professor Ramadan and several organizations that had sought Ramadan's presence as a speaker or visiting lecturer. The American Academy of Religion, AAUP, and the PEN American Center now claimed not only that they had a valid legal interest in Ramadan's visa status, but that the "ideological exclusion provision" of the PATRIOT Act which had apparently triggered his exclusion was in clear violation of the First Amendment's protection for freedom of speech.

This lawsuit was as novel as it was potentially significant in the challenge to U.S. treatment of scholarly visitors. Yet there were possible precedents, and the case drew the attention not only of the media but of federal Judge Paul Crotty, to whom it had been assigned in the Southern District of New York.

During a hearing before the judge in mid April, the government insisted that it had never really barred Ramadan's access, since he had resigned his Notre Dame faculty position before any final action had been taken on the initial visa issue. His renewed application was still under review, the Justice Department said, adding that subsequent inquiries and interviews had raised new and "serious questions" about his eligibility to obtain a visa. Specifically, the government noted that during one recent interview Ramadan had openly expressed his opposition to the American presence in Iraq.

At the hearing, Judge Crotty seemed strongly disposed to press the government to process the later visa application, remarking from the bench that the plaintiff's "First Amendment rights can't wait forever." On June 23, Crotty issued an opinion that could only be termed a blistering indictment of the government's case. The judge found "no hint of what or who prompted the 'prudential revocation.'" Nor had the government given so much as a "clue as to why it is suspicious of Ramadan, or what potential threats it is investigating or contemplating." Late in the opinion Crotty reiterated that the government had "not provided any reason for excluding Ramadan from the United States."

With due acknowledgment of the essential balance between free speech and national security, Judge Crotty rejected out of hand the government's claim that it was still unable to expedite Ramadan's petition. Noting that "the government has more than adequate information at hand to decide this matter," he gave the United States a maximum of 90 days within which to do precisely that. There may well be appeals, even to the Supreme Court, but the vital components of Ramadan's case have clearly received judicial vindication.

The Ramadan suit is not the only pending court test of the government's treatment of visiting scholars. The ACLU also filed suit in federal court, under the Freedom of Information Act, seeking detailed information about the broader grounds on which various applicants, mostly foreign scholars, have been denied U.S. visas. The "espousing terrorism" provision has been used as a subterfuge for the exclusion of invited (and otherwise welcome) academic visitors who have simply criticized or publicly attacked U.S. policy in the Middle East or elsewhere, the suit contends. However, it remains to be seen how far national security concerns may blunt or limit the scope of such a request.

***Evidence of apparently mounting hostility toward foreign visitors is not hard to find.***

***The U.S. is losing its long dominant role as the nation of choice for foreign students and scholars.***

***Latin American scholars seem to have encountered special scrutiny and official disfavor.***



One other suit, filed in June 2006, focuses on the outgoing rather than the incoming side of foreign academic exchange. A group of U.S.-based Latin American scholars brought suit against the Treasury Department to challenge regulations, substantially modified in 2004, that have severely inhibited travel to, and study in, Cuba. The plaintiffs claim that such constraints abridge free speech and academic freedom, in that they effectively prevent American scholars and teachers from accompanying their students who take part in the handful of surviving Cuban study-abroad programs (a tiny residue of what were once more than 200 such academic exchanges).

If Florida lawmakers have their way, things might even get worse. In mid April both houses of the Florida legislature approved a bill that would bar the state's colleges and universities from using public or private funds to pay for student or faculty trips to Iran, Libya, Sudan, North Korea or Cuba.

Meanwhile, an even more ominous Florida proposal would "redirect" some \$8 million in state funds originally committed to support incoming foreign students into need-based student aid for Floridians. That bill's sponsor insists that "we're not saying anything nasty to foreign students," but rather declaring that "we want to take care of our own kids first." Not surprisingly, both measures have evoked strong opposition from Florida's public universities and their faculties, and from international students and scholars.

While the focus of such concerns has centered mostly on specific foreign nations, and on those visiting scholars whose disciplines have obvious national security import, the effects of this apparent hostility have been felt more broadly. In April 2006, the eminent cellist Yo-Yo Ma testified before a U.S. House committee on the issue of cultural exchange. Official fears about admitting terrorists, he lamented, have also managed to bar many musicians and artists from coming to the United States. Government policy has created "extraordinarily high" barriers to bringing foreign artists to this country, Ma said. "Many of our friends still come, [but] there certainly are many people who decide they don't want to."

The latest news in this field is not, however, entirely bleak. There are at least two encouraging signs of rapprochement between the academic community and the Bush Administration. After several years of worrisome declines in applications from, and enrollment at, U.S. universities by foreign graduate students, 2005-06 surveys revealed an encouraging reversal of these trends.

The Council of Graduate Schools reported that applications from international students had risen a healthy 11 percent, year over year—a trend which the Council's president attributed to "sustained efforts by both the federal government and graduate schools."

Though the application rate is still 23 percent below that for 2003, the recovery is expected to continue to increase. Major credit on the government side goes to vigorous efforts by the Departments of State and Homeland Security to expedite the processing of visa applications for foreign students and visitors. Many universities have also intensified their own recruitment programs and have added new incentives for foreign graduate students.

Confirming these trends, but also warning that more remains to be done, NAFSA: Association of International Educators issued a major report in June 2006. While the report praised the ameliorative government efforts, it noted with alarm that, in an increasingly competitive world environment, the U.S. is losing its long dominant role as the

nation of choice for foreign students and scholars, and urged the framing of a new national strategy to address this challenge. Especially heartening in this regard are such initiatives as a pending Senate bill that would increase the time during which a foreign student may continue to work in the U.S. after receiving a degree, and that would also exempt such students from current limits on the number of green cards issued in particular fields.

The other piece of good news comes from a very different sector. Early in the summer of 2005, the Commerce Department shocked university scientists by threatening an expanded view of the "deemed export" doctrine that would effectively compel research institutions to obtain export licenses simply to employ many foreign graduate students and visiting scholars to work on certain sensitive projects in U.S. laboratories. The licensing requirement would be tied not to a scholar's current nation of residence, as it had been in the past, but rather to the nation of birth.

The outcry from the academic research community was immediate and intense. Higher education groups protested that any such burden would not only compound already intrusive record-keeping and data-gathering tasks, but would also deter many foreign scholars from ever seeking places in U.S. laboratories.

Early in 2006 the worst features of the proposal were withdrawn, and late in the spring, Commerce officials announced a one-year postponement of what remained of the feared policy, along with the creation of a study group to reassess the need to apply the "deemed export" policy in so draconian a fashion.

Then in mid June the Commerce Department announced the cancellation of the

***The ACLU has filed suit in federal court seeking detailed information about the broader grounds on which foreign scholars have been denied U.S. visas.***

***A group of U.S.-based Latin American scholars brought suit against the Treasury Department to challenge regulations that have severely inhibited travel to Cuba.***

"deemed export" concept as applied to laboratory scientists. For once, in an extremely sensitive matter of academic research and scholarship, there were clear signs that the Federal Government seemed to have recognized the urgent needs of academic science, as well as the national security implications of barring or discouraging foreign scholars from U.S. laboratories. ♦

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**By David L. Kirp**

**I** RECENTLY SPENT a week in Taiwan, discussing the ever-growing global power of market forces in higher education. It was a madcap trip—four universities, four cities, four days—and everywhere I went the conversation sounded partly like a replay of numerous conversations on American campuses. Has the earth, as *New York Times* columnist Thomas L. Friedman would have it, become "flat"?

I've experienced a similar sense of "déjà vu all over again" at universities from Wellington to Milan, where complaints about top faculty being lured away, competition for students and government funding cutbacks fill the air. Indeed, when in Taiwan I described the Italian higher education situation, without naming the country, everyone in the audience assumed I was talking about their country. A major Taiwanese publisher had translated my book, "Shakespeare, Einstein, and the Bottom Line: The Marketing of Higher Education"—re-titling it, tellingly, "To Save the University"—and the list of individuals who penned introductions reads like a "Who's Who" in Taiwanese higher education.

Still, the more closely I listened, the more clearly the differences emerged. Imagine, for instance, an American university president complaining that potential donors give away huge sums, not to higher education but to the temple (Buddhist, of course, not Jewish), in hopes of acquiring karma for the next life. And imagine higher education policy being shaped in a political environment dominated by the possibility of national annihilation.

When it comes to academe, Tom Friedman has it only partly right. While the earth is surely flattening, it isn't flat, and it isn't likely to become so. What Taiwan (or Italy, Mexico or China, for that matter) can teach is that, in developing national higher education policy, it is vital not to be bedazzled by the marketplace—not to lose sight of key country-specific differences that define sensible policy options.

The familiar forces of globalization are everywhere in evidence in Taiwan. Taipei, the capital, has a 7-11 and a Starbucks every couple of blocks, not to mention Gold's Gym and eight (eight!) German restaurants. The nation bills itself as "Silicon Island," and it has the science parks and worldwide high-tech presence to justify that boast.

The "knowledge economy" requires "knowledge workers," of course, and universities have expanded with astonishing speed to meet this demand. Here, as in many corners of the

world, higher education has gone from being an elite enterprise to a mass system. What's different, not just in Taiwan but in a number of East and South Asian countries, is the pace of change. In the U.S., the percent of college-goers hasn't changed much in a generation—about six in ten high school graduates enroll in a college or university—while in Taiwan, it's more than eight in ten. That's a four-fold increase in 30 years, and Taiwan now ranks second in the world, after Korea, in the percent of college-goers.

As is true everywhere higher education has become widely accessible, there is concern about the degradation of the bachelor's degree. New private universities have mushroomed in the past generation—they account for two-thirds of Taiwan's 160 institutions of higher learning, and enroll more than 60 percent of Taiwanese undergraduates—and the worst of them, like their American counterparts, admit anyone,

***continued next page***

## Taiwan's Great Accomplishment

### The country has produced a dramatic expansion of higher education

***Taiwan bills itself as "Silicon Island," and it has the science parks and worldwide high-tech presence to justify that boast.***

***Imagine higher education policy being shaped in a political environment dominated by the possibility of national annihilation.***



*from preceding page*

however ill-prepared, who can scrape up the tuition.

Competition is fierce for entrance to top-ranked universities like National Taiwan University (NTU). On the eve of the crucial national entrance examination, secondary school students post red slips of paper at the temples, appeals to Buddha or Confucius to grant them a top score. One result, as a dean from a less prestigious university bitterly complained during my visit, is unequal access to the best schools.

As in the U.S., wealthy students, whose parents can afford to give them advantages like top-notch cram courses, go to the top-ranked institutions, while those from poorer families wind up lower on the academic totem pole. Not only do public universities have a near-monopoly on prestige, but because tuition is half what private schools charge, well-off families typically pay less than poor families for their children's college education. That too is a common American lament—as the recent *Chronicle of Higher Education* report on access confirms, inequities in access are much greater on this side of the Pacific.

More and more, competition for students has become international. Taiwan has long seen its best Ph.D. students head to the U.S., many of them for good, and it is trying to change that. A few institutions are developing graduate programs, with some courses taught in English, to attract foreign students, and the top universities have partnerships with overseas counterparts, which bring a handful of exchange students. But the student flow is mainly in the other direction—countries such as Australia and, increasingly, China, are poaching undergraduates. So far, foreign institutions haven't set up shop. But if the international negotiations over “services” like high tech—and higher education—mean “trade barriers” must come down, then such institutions as the University of Singapore or the University of Phoenix may well open branch campuses.

Across the globe, there is heated competition for star professors. It was big news when Taiwan's one Nobel laureate, chemist Lee Yuan-tseh, returned to his homeland in 1994, after spending most of his career at Berkeley, to head the country's foremost research center. And National Taiwan University, listed among the top 200 research universities internationally in Shanghai Jiao Tong University's influential rankings, has recruited some overseas scholars. But comparatively low faculty salaries and a flat pay scale have meant a long-term brain drain, especially to American universities, which can offer luminaries fatter paychecks and more lavish research facilities.

NTU has managed to remain a player in the international league despite the fact that it spends just a third as much per student as the University of Singapore and just a tenth as much as the University of Tokyo. Three other Taiwanese universities are ranked among the top 500 research institutions worldwide despite having even fewer resources.

In Taiwan as in many countries, government funding has not kept pace with the expansion of higher education. Tuition at public universities has remained low because of pressure from students and parents, and private donors are still a rarity (remember those contributions to the temple). The president of one major university told me he had raised just a million dollars in 2005.

Public universities, which have depended entirely on government for research support, are increasingly signing substantial long-term contracts with high-tech firms. That is a way of raising money, to be sure, but it's not necessarily a way to promote the academic mission or to raise universities' international visibility. Industry's focus is on the bottom line—that is what the market

values—and this means underwriting projects that promise a quick payoff, rather than more speculative science. One highly ranked university boasts two new science labs, paid for by a high-tech firm. But because the company has some influence on the research agenda and first rights to patent licenses, these buildings are more outposts of industry than sources of innovation.

What should the next decade hold for higher education in Taiwan? If you buy into the approach touted by *The Economist* and embraced by some policymakers, the answer is the same across the postindustrial world: America is the model and the market is the strategy. But reliance on the market, and the winner-take-all competition that it generates, is a decidedly imperfect strategy for the U.S. It's no cure-all for Taiwan.

Taiwan's great accomplishment has been the dramatic expansion of higher education. Few other countries have been remotely as successful in creating a mass system. Whether Taiwan can create a stronger system of colleges and universities is the next generation's challenge. A dose of market discipline would help. This means giving universities greater autonomy to set tuition and faculty salaries, as well as to determine their own academic priorities. With the government's blessing, NTU is about to head down that path, and there is no reason why other universities should not be allowed to follow suit.

What makes the “American model” so seductive is the dominance of U.S. research universities in the world rankings—eight out of the top ten, 17 of the top 20, four of the University of California campuses among the top 50 in the world, according to the Shanghai rankings. NTU and a handful of other Taiwanese institutions want to compete in that

***On the eve of the crucial national entrance examination, secondary school students appeal to Buddha or Confucius to grant them a top score.***

***Taiwan would be smart to nurture colleges whose main mission is good undergraduate education, rather than to multiply weak graduate programs.***

***In Taiwan, as in many countries, government funding has not kept pace with the expansion of higher education.***

league. NTU's president, Si-Chen Li, voices an ambition familiar to presidents of research universities everywhere: He wants his institution to be among the hundred best in the world. Greater freedom to compete in the world markets will help make that possible. So will greater research support from government, which has committed nearly \$2 billion, over a five-year period, for that purpose.

While the U.S. is dominant at the top of the heap, the quality of American higher learning drops off pretty rapidly. More than eighty percent of colleges and universities are essentially nonselective; the ability of their students and the rigor of their courses are at best uneven. This too is a market-driven outcome—the rich do get richer—but it's not one that Taiwan, or any other nation, should copy.

The better model is California's 1960 Master Plan. With its guarantee of some higher education for everyone, its division of responsibility for teaching, research and training among different kinds of institutions, as well as its promise of student mobility, that Plan became a vision for the world. But in California, the Master Plan is now a broken promise, done in by steeply rising tuition—which, for out-of-state and professional school students, approaches the levels of elite private universities—and insufficient spaces for all qualified undergraduates. Even community colleges, historically free, have been boosting their fees and so scaring off students by the tens of thousands. California is now doing an especially bad job of educating Latino immigrants, on whom the state's economy and polity will heavily depend.

There is no reason why Taiwan should follow suit. With the country having reached an effective ceiling on enrollment, it has the opportunity to embrace the Master Plan concept of differentiating among types of higher education institutions, with different schools emphasizing teaching, research and training. When this idea was initially broached, however, universities rebelled—one president of a private school reportedly threatened to commit suicide if the government didn't permit his institution to train graduate students—and the government backed off.

Still, Taiwan would be smart to nurture colleges whose main mission is good undergraduate education, rather than to multiply weak graduate programs. It also makes sense for Taiwanese policymakers to brave student resistance and raise tuition, while delivering the instructional programs and scholarships that will boost the chances of the least well-off. In this respect, Britain has shown the way.

Taiwanese industry needs to learn that underwriting basic as well as applied research is vital to the nation's long-term economic prospects and political vitality; collaborative support for “pre-competitive” research, a strategy detailed in “Shakespeare, Einstein, and the Bottom Line,” offers one model. Wealthy Taiwanese have to be shown that contributions to higher education are a critical investment in their country's future. Cultivating the well-off is a skill that American public universities have been obliged to acquire during the past generation, and there's something to be learned from their experience. Meanwhile, the top universities should be strengthened. They need to compete in the Asian market for students and in the world market for ideas.

Equity and excellence, the market and the commonweal—there is no need to choose among those values. If Taiwan rises to the challenge, it deserves to become a model of higher education that merits global emulation. ♦

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## Left Behind

### Many disadvantaged students are “hidden in averages”

By Rebecca Zwick

**F**OR THE FIRST TIME in history, every state has an approved accountability plan to ensure academic proficiency for every child. Achievement gaps are being identified and addressed. The success of schools is now being measured on the academic achievement of all students so that children who need help aren't hidden in averages.”

This is part of what then-Secretary of Education Rod Paige had to say about the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in a March 2004 “memo to editorial writers” that still appears on the U.S. Department of Education website. Now, as the 2007 reauthorization of



NCLB approaches, a vast number of children who need help in school have vanished from attention entirely. And these children are likely to be racial or ethnic minorities, special education students, or students with limited English proficiency.

This may seem surprising, given that NCLB proponents have relentlessly touted the law's requirement that results be considered separately for ethnic and socioeconomic groups, for students with disabilities, and for those with limited English proficiency. Each school must calculate, for each grade, subject area and student group, the percentage of students who are proficient according to the state's federally approved standards. If even one of these groups, in a single grade and subject area, does not attain the targeted proficiency rate, the school in question will be labeled as having failed to make AYP—adequate yearly progress. Or that's how it's supposed to work.

***Under the No Child Left Behind Act, vast numbers of children who need help in school have vanished from attention entirely.***

From the very beginning, though, there has been an out: the “minimum n,” or minimum group size. If the number of the students in a particular group falls below a minimum, the school is off the hook, because the results for that group do not count in AYP calculations. (These students are still included in the overall school results, but they are, in fact, “hidden in averages,” the very situation NCLB was supposed to prevent.)

In April 2006, the Associated Press estimated, based on its own analysis, that nearly two million students were not being counted because of this loophole. Even more troubling was the fact that

minority students were seven times as likely to be excluded as white students. In response to the AP analysis, Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings said, “We ought to do more about that,” adding that the issue will be addressed during the reauthorization process.

So how did this disturbing situation come about? In their NCLB plans, states were asked to propose a minimum n—the number of students below which a group's results wouldn't count. These minimum group sizes, along with the rest of the states' accountability plans, had to be approved by the Department of Education. Although there was some variation, most states initially set minimum group sizes of 30 to 40 students. But in 2004, the states were invited to initiate changes to their NCLB plans, resulting in a flurry of state requests for amendments and exceptions.

The many modifications to state accountability policies have drawn the attention of a number of agencies, including the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), the Center on Education Policy (CEP), an independent research organization, and the Harvard Civil Rights Project, all of which have published reports on this topic. According to a November 2005 CEP report, 23 states asked for and received amendments to their minimum n rules in 2004 or 2005. Some states have now received approval to use minimum numbers as large as 100 or 200 (e.g., Florida and Virginia respectively).

As the CEP report notes, “Many states have responded [to the difficulty of making AYP] by raising the minimum subgroup size, so that more students with disabilities can be excluded from school-level AYP calculations.” For example, Alaska obtained permission from the Education Department to increase its minimum group size from 20 to 40 for students with disabilities, and for students with limited English proficiency. The motivation for Alaska's request, according to an October 2005 CCSSO report, was that 65 of the state's schools had failed to make AYP because of missed targets for students with disabilities.

In addition, some states have received permission to use “confidence intervals” in making AYP determinations. According to the CEP, 31 states included these in their original plans, and 27 states were granted permission to amend or add a confidence interval procedure in 2004 or 2005.

Confidence intervals are widely applied in many statistical analyses, including political polls. How do they work? Suppose a pollster seeks to estimate the percentage of U.S. adults supporting Candidate X. We'll never know the true percentage since we are not contacting all US adults. Based on a random sample of 1,000 people, the pollster reports that the percentage supporting the candidate is 47 percent, plus or minus three percentage points. This conclusion is roughly equivalent to saying we're 95 percent confident that the “true” percentage lies between 44 percent and 50 percent. (A slightly more rigorous way of describing this result is that this procedure will lead to an interval that brackets the true value 95 percent of the time.) The interval ranging from 44 percent to 50 percent is called a 95 percent confidence interval for the true percentage of voters supporting Candidate X.

A similar idea is behind the use of confidence intervals for NCLB proficiency rates (although the situation is somewhat different, in that a school's estimated proficiency rate is not based on a random sample of students). Suppose a school's proficiency rate for a particular category of students is 47 percent, with a confidence interval ranging from 44 percent to 50 percent. If the school's target rate is 50 percent, the school is considered to have met the target, even though its actual rate is lower, because 50 percent is included in the interval. This may not seem particularly troublesome in this example, but in fact, the confidence interval for a small school would be much wider than six percentage points, which means that a school with a proficiency rate much lower than the target could escape accountability.

Confidence intervals “automatically” take into account the fact that, all other things

being equal, a proficiency rate based on a smaller group of students is less precisely determined than a rate based on a larger number. While the computation of confidence intervals is a well-established procedure, the inconsistent application of this approach in NCLB compounds the inequities resulting from the lack of uniform minimum group size

rules. Confidence interval rules essentially supersede minimum n rules—even if the minimum n has been met, the confidence interval provides a further route through which a group can be exempted from AYP calculations. If two states have the same minimum n, but one uses confidence intervals, the confidence interval state is, in effect, imposing a less stringent standard.

To further complicate things, the confidence interval procedures adopted by the states vary in their confidence level (and in other technical respects). In AYP calculations, 95 percent or 99

percent confidence intervals are typically used. For a given proficiency rate and number of students, a 99 percent interval will be wider, which, in effect, gives the state additional leeway.

To better understand the effect of differing policies involving minimum group sizes and confidence intervals, consider a hypothetical example involving four schools, one in each of four states. Suppose the target proficiency rate in, say, grade four math for all four states is 50 percent. Now let's focus on a particular student population—say, students with limited English proficiency. For simplicity, we'll assume there are exactly 30 such students in each of the four schools. Suppose that the schools have met AYP standards for all other student groups, so their fate rests on the determination that is made regarding the math proficiency of grade four students with limited English proficiency. Let's say the percentage of such students who are math-proficient is 49 percent in School one, 35 percent in School two, 30 percent in School three, and 25 percent in School four. Under very realistic conditions, we could find that School one, with the highest proficiency rate, did not make AYP, while the other three schools did.

How could that happen? Suppose School one is in a state that uses a minimum n of ten, like Louisiana. In that case, its math proficiency rate of 49 percent for grade four students with limited English proficiency counts toward the AYP decision and, although the rate is close to the 50 percent target, it falls short.

School two, with a proficiency rate of 35 percent, is located in a state that uses 95 percent confidence intervals, like Illinois. Because the interval (which I calculated using the proficiency rate and the number of students) stretches from 17.9 percent to 52.1 percent, the school's proficiency rate is deemed indistinguishable from the state target rate of 50 percent, and the state is in the clear.

School three, with a proficiency rate of 30 percent, is in a state that uses 99 percent confidence intervals, like Mississippi. Here, the interval ranges from 8.4 percent to 51.6 percent, so again, the conclusion is that the school's proficiency rate is not statistically different from the state target rate.

Finally, School four, with a proficiency rate of only 25 percent, has not jeopardized its AYP status because the state in which it is located uses a minimum n of 40 for students with limited English proficiency, like Minnesota.

Now, it's not bad that NCLB is flexible in its implementation. No one who cares about education would argue for rigid adherence to a one-size-fits-all policy for all aspects of the legislation. But the variation across states is troubling from two perspectives. First, some state actions—like Alaska's request to raise the minimum n for students with limited English proficiency and for students with disabilities—are clearly attempts to evade the law's intended focus on student groups that have historically been ignored. Students who are excluded from NCLB group-level calculations are, of course, likely to be those from smaller groups such as ethnic minorities. Second, the government's decisions about what policies to permit seem to be quite haphazard, resulting in an odd patchwork of inconsistent guidelines.

As a result, states can't be compared to each other, or even to themselves over time. Consider that states started out with different tests and different proficiency definitions, as well as different proposed trajectories toward the official goal of 100 percent proficiency. Now add to this the effect of the modifications and exceptions to state accountability plans. As the CCSSO report notes, “the accumulation of amendments and ‘flexibility’ may result in educational accountability systems that lack any real connection to the achievement goals they were supposed to realize.”

Put another way, the federal government claims that under NCLB, all children are being counted. They are not. ♦

***Some state actions are clearly attempts to evade the law's intended focus on student groups that have historically been ignored.***

***The government's decisions about what policies to permit seem to be quite haphazard, resulting in an odd patchwork of inconsistent guidelines.***

***Although the No Child Left Behind Act is flexible in its implementation, the variation across states is troubling.***

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## THE M WORD

from page 1

chair of the marketing committee at Centre College in Kentucky, whose fragile size—it had only 700 students when Norris started there—made it, like Northeastern, a marketing pioneer. “Colleges and universities large and small now have marketing teams, marketing plans, and growing budgets for paid advertising.”

But while it may be far more widely practiced than before, marketing by universities and colleges also seems widely misunderstood, or at least underestimated. It has come to be about more than billboards or brochures, websites or updated logos. It entails nothing less than changes in the structure of universities themselves, their campuses, and their curricula, based on what best serves a target audience—prospective students and their parents, mainly, but also alumni. Or, as universities are slowly beginning to consider them, the customers.

“Colleges and universities have been marketing themselves since Harvard put up the statue of John Harvard in Harvard Yard,” said Rodney Ferguson, senior partner in the Washington office of the higher education marketing consulting firm Lipman Hearne. “What’s relatively new is that they’ve discovered that they are in a very competitive marketplace for attracting students, faculty and donors, and that those things are not going to happen if they’re sitting on their hands. What you’ve

seen is the development of a consumer marketplace.”

This is a shift as revolutionary as it has been largely overlooked. Like consumer product manufacturers, schools including Northeastern and DePaul now conduct marketing analyses before adding new academic programs. In the name of marketing, they’re beefing up premier departments, trimming weak ones, transforming their facilities, reducing class sizes, lining up high-profile speakers to attract attention, even changing their names. They are turning to a fast-growing industry of consultants to help determine how to price and deliver higher education—though they quickly add that they would rather avoid using the term “higher education,” because it doesn’t test well in focus groups. (“Colleges and universities” tests better.) Marketing administrators are being elevated into the policymaking echelons.

“The classic definition of marketing is product, price, placement and promotion—the four Ps,” explained John Lippincott, president of the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, or CASE. “When people talk about marketing in higher education, they’re often talking about that fourth P, promotion, when in fact if you are truly engaged in marketing, you have to look at the product. To apply marketing to higher education is to be willing to ask questions about the very product itself, and whether indeed it is responsive to the people the institution is dedicated to serving.” Or, as outgoing



MUMALONEY, BLACK STAR FOR CROSSTALK

**“We’re looking at alumni as a way of spreading word about the university,” says Brian Kenny, who directs Northeastern’s marketing campaign.**

Northeastern President Richard Freeland put it: “Before you tell your story, you have to have a good story to tell.”

It seemed within the realm of possibility that Northeastern’s story might come to an end in the early 1990s, after what was once the nation’s largest private university suffered several consecutive years of enrollment declines. An urban commuter school that started out by offering evening classes at the YMCA in 1898, it had raised its tuition too high to continue to attract the children of blue-collar families once drawn

by its trademark co-op program, which put them into long, paid internships in their chosen careers at local companies while they were still in school.

Northeastern’s rivals were more respected, better-known, shinier private institutions such as Boston University, and nearby public universities that charged far less. So it set out to remake its image—not just by hanging billboards, but by recognizing how the school itself would need to change in order to compete.

“We always believed that the central

## HOROWITZ

from page 9

derided, even downgraded for expressing views contrary to what they described as higher education’s prevailing left-wing orthodoxy.

But the conference’s most conspicuous and energetic participant was Horowitz himself, waxing free with his takes on all topics and, in apparent attempts to establish his bona fides as a critic of the left, slipping in passing references to his own journey from that side of the political divide. This he lays out at length in his 1997 autobiography, “Radical Son: a Generational Odyssey”: His parents were communists; as an undergraduate at Columbia in the 1950s, he was a committed Marxist; as a graduate student at Berkeley in the 1960s, he defended the Cuban revolution and demonstrated against nuclear testing and the Vietnam War; he went on to become a writer and editor for the glossy 1960s-era New Left magazine *Ramparts* and a friend of the Black Panthers.

The Panthers’ descent into violence was “a big knock on the head,” Horowitz wrote, the beginning of his revulsion against all things left. In 1988, having made a complete political about-face, he founded the Los Angeles-based Center for the Study of Popular Culture to oppose leftism in academia, Hollywood and public broadcasting. He has been focusing on academia since 2003. The idea for the Academic Bill of Rights campaign crystallized for him, he said, when a professor offered students credit for protesting a speech Horowitz gave to the College Republicans at the

University of Missouri.

Horowitz said he started the Center on an annual budget of \$100,000. By 2004, according to the latest available tax return, it had ballooned to \$3.9 million, of which \$845,000 went to fundraising and \$337,000 to his salary. A combination of such sources as events, books, subscriptions and mailing list rental brought in revenue of a little over \$500,000; the rest of the money came from contributions, the return shows.

The bulk of the Center’s financing

***Horowitz claims that he wants only to expand political dialogue on campus. But on most of today’s issues, he comes down hard on the right.***

comes from a base of 57,000 individual supporters, of whom maybe 1,000 give around \$1,000 at a time, Horowitz said. “I think the majority of my donors are \$50 donors. That’s my strength.” And he stressed that none of the money comes from corporations.

According to other public records, the Center’s biggest contributors, donating in chunks of as much as \$250,000, have been the Sarah Scaife Foundation Inc., the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation Inc., the Randolph Foundation, and the recently shuttered John J. Olin Foundation. All are known for backing conservative causes.

Separately, the Randolph Foundation funded a study, published last year, which concluded that “a substantial shift to the left in party identification and ideology” has taken place in academia since the mid-1980s. The foundation’s evidence is a survey showing that 72 percent of teachers at American colleges and universities identify themselves as liberal, compared with 15 percent who describe themselves as conservative, with the liberal tilt greatest at elite schools and in humanities and social sciences departments.

The popular image of academia as a bastion of liberal to leftist politics is of long standing. And complaints about it have erupted from time to time ever since the 1930s.

Contrary to that survey, Howard Brick, a professor specializing in intellectual history at Washington University in St. Louis, believes the last three decades have actually witnessed “considerable moderation” toward the right in the campus political climate. There’s little evidence of political indoctrination or suppression of debate, he said. “Most faculty whom I would recognize as of the left make a decided effort to be fair, welcome debate and refrain from making their classroom presentations a matter of polemics.”

Nor, according to a study published last year in the *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, are professors as a general rule punishing conservative students by giving them lower grades. Conservatives and liberals get comparable grades in sociology, cultural anthropology and women’s studies courses, and conservatives get higher grades than liberals in business and eco-

nomics, the study found.

Horowitz, however, deals not in general rules but specific cases, like that of Ward Churchill—an example whose usefulness to him may be running out. In May, a committee of University of Colorado faculty members found the controversial professor guilty of multiple violations of scholarly standards in his research. At press time, the committee’s report was working its way through the university bureaucracy. Phil DiStefano, interim chancellor at the university’s Boulder campus, has started proceedings to fire Churchill, but the final decision rests with the Board of Regents and university President Hank Brown.

Meanwhile, Horowitz has taken up a new case, a positive example from his perspective: Sean Allen, a conservative Colorado high school student who recorded his geography teacher making what advocates describe as a diatribe against George Bush in class. Allen took his evidence to conservative radio and television commentators, who made a hero of him. So did Horowitz, who presented him with the first “Sean Allen Award,” to be given annually to a student who exposes political advocacy by high school teachers.

Horowitz intends to open a new, pre-college front in his campaign. Samuel E. Rohrer, a Republican state representative in Pennsylvania, signed right up, pledging to hold hearings there on an academic bill of rights for elementary and secondary school students. ♦

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story had to be that this is a first-rate university," Freeland said. "[But] if we're going to claim excellence in this arena, we'd better be excellent in it. Whatever story we told to the outside world had to be one that our community had to be able to repeat with a straight face and a pure heart."

The university settled on spotlighting the one thing that most differentiated Northeastern from its competitors: the co-

***Today's prospective students, who have been marketed to since birth, are trained to respond to the language of marketing.***

op program. Nearly two-thirds of its students are offered jobs by the employers that take them on as co-op interns. They have a leg up in a competitive hiring market over counterparts from other schools. This would set Northeastern University apart. "The central theme has been what we call the value proposition for Northeastern, which is to say, Northeastern is a first-class institution that has the added value of co-op education," Freeland said.

This also meant that "co-op," as it has been nicknamed, would have to live up to the hype.

"I wouldn't say that the plan at the center of our marketing drove us to make sure we were doing this as well as we can," said Freeland. "It was more the other way around." The bottom line, he said, is that "you can become a used-car salesman if you want, or you can become an effective communicator about what's terrific about a place. You have to know what your message is going to be, and how you can express that in a few short statements. And those short statements can't just be a product of your PR department."

Northeastern put its money where its mouth was. Conscious that prospective students are also influenced by universities' facilities—a study this year by the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers confirmed that students make their decisions about which college to attend based largely on the quality of facilities—it has spent \$477 million since 1992 upgrading its once-drab inner-city campus, replacing parking lots with grassy quadrangles and building new classrooms, a sparkling fitness center, and seven striking new dorms. Panoramic views showing lots of green surrounded by innovative new buildings began to pop up on the website.

"The physical changes in the campus have played a huge role in the repositioning of Northeastern," Freeland said. "As we became aware of that, we incorporated it more and more into our marketing: You get a first-class campus environment, and on top of that you get co-op education."

What Northeastern got in return was a rebound in undergraduate enrollment to 14,492, up from 10,747 a decade before. Applications more than doubled, squeezing the acceptance rate from 85 percent to 47 percent, which makes Northeastern

more selective in admissions than Boston University. The average SAT score rose from 1008 to 1224. And the onetime commuter school saw the proportion of its students who came from outside Massachusetts jump from less than half to more than two-thirds.

This kind of success has gotten the attention of other universities. While they might not have the enrollment problems that spurred Northeastern into action, they do foresee a dropoff in the number of high school graduates beginning in 2009. They also fear the inroads being made by for-profit companies like the University of Phoenix, by universities abroad, and, for that matter, by schools that are ahead of them in marketing. Public universities, meanwhile, face continuing declines in support from legislators and taxpayers; state spending per student on higher education has fallen 13 percent since 1991.

It is also a factor that today's prospective students, who have been marketed to since birth, are trained to respond to the language of marketing. Their parents are more likely to have gone to college, too, and to understand the system—that they have a choice and can shop for the best deal—at a time when tuition has increased by 54 percent over the last ten years at four-year universities. All of which is pushing universities into marketing themselves even at a time when there still is a sufficient supply of students for everybody.

"One of the ironies is that we are actually in an era of high demand, even as we're seeing institutions spending more money on marketing," Lippincott said. "But those institutions that really are taking marketing seriously are, in fact, doing the research. They're seeing the numbers and realizing that if they're going to continue to build the quality of their incoming

***Conscious that prospective students are influenced by universities' facilities, Northeastern has spent \$477 million since 1992 upgrading its once-drab inner-city campus.***

classes, they have to start now."

"We are in a climate of government cutbacks that is causing institutions, public institutions in particular, to think more about their marketplace, their overall positioning in the world," said Larry Lauer, vice chancellor for marketing and communications at Texas Christian University, in Fort Worth, Texas.

That doesn't mean it's always easy to market the idea of marketing—what some higher education marketing officials jokingly call "the M word"—on university campuses themselves. "There's always going to be nervousness in a college or a university or any other nonprofit organization about adopting practices that appear to be more associated with the for-profit sector," Lippincott said. Freeland said

there is "a huge resistance to the whole idea of marketing, to the language of marketing. There's a notion that it's somehow undignified for an institution of higher education, that something like marketing, which the Ivy League institutions historically have never thought about, is inappropriate or even degrading, that it involves some kind of a loss of institutional dignity."

Many schools avoid the terms marketing and advertising, preferring to call what they do to promote themselves "institutional advancement" or "image enhancement." When Norris arrived at Centre College 27 years ago, he said, "You didn't really use the word marketing. You might talk about enhancing the school's reputation, or ways to get the word out or increase name recognition. But not marketing."

In a meeting of faculty one day, Norris spoke of some impressions, apparently erroneous, that students had of his school. "I said, 'Well, we need to address those because, as we say in marketing, perception is reality.'"

"I always thought reality was reality," huffed a physics professor sitting next to him.

"I responded," Norris recalled, "that the customer's perception is the reality on which he or she will act."

There remains resistance, said Ferguson, the consultant. "But that resistance has fallen off precipitously in the last three or four years, because the places that have not paid attention to how they are perceived in the mind of the market have seen falling enrollments, falling donations, and falling attention among their various audiences. When those things happen, the resistance falls away pretty quickly."

Tom Hayes compares the discovery of marketing by colleges and universities to what happened in the healthcare industry. "Every single thing in healthcare marketing is happening in higher education," said Hayes, a professor of marketing at Xavier University in Ohio, editor of the *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, and founder of the American Marketing Association's Symposium on the Marketing of Higher Education. "For universities, this involves the concept of segmentation, of not trying to be all things to all people, just as hospitals had to do when they found they had too many beds for the demographics to support. They had to decide if their business was really to provide healthcare to everyone in need. Doctors thought this was a philistine concept, and it's the same with faculty."

But it is well under way. Many schools now require market assessments before approving new programs. "In a world of limited resources you shouldn't be adding a major or a program until you've done a market analysis. What's your break-even, what's your competition?" Hayes said.

DePaul, for example, has an elaborate process worked out between its marketing group and academic affairs office to include a marketing analysis, a marketing



KRISHNUT, BLACK STAR, FOR CROSSTALK

***Declines in federal and state support for higher education have led to more aggressive marketing campaigns, says Larry Lauer of Texas Christian University.***

plan and an enrollment plan jointly with the curricular plan for any new program. The process is drawn without apology from consumer products marketing. "We could find ample evidence of great ideas and great new products brought to market that failed, much of which was tied to inadequate assessment of the market opportunity," said David Kalsbeek, vice president for enrollment management.

New programs at DePaul are generally turned down if they are not expected to make a return on the investment, if the market doesn't exist, or if the university cannot compete on price with rival schools. "At an institution that is over 90 percent tuition-dependent for its financial resources, it makes sense for the marketing strategy to be mostly focused on student enrollment issues," Kalsbeek said.

There are occasions when DePaul approves a program that isn't necessarily going to attract a new market. One example is Islamic Studies, which the university decided served an important purpose. More telling was the addition of a master's degree in social work after market analysis showed it was the field most in demand in Illinois that DePaul didn't offer. "Everything gravitated toward the support of a master's in social work, and our market analysis gave that dean confidence to invest in new faculty and to differentiate our program from similar programs in the market," Kalsbeek said. He calls this "a bipartisan partnership" between marketing and academics.

Marketing by universities "is more a way of thinking than it is merely an adding of promotional tools to gain attention," said Texas Christian's Lauer. "It's the thinking and the research that goes into positioning an institution in the marketplace. Whatever you imagine to be your product, how you distribute it, how you price it, and how you deliver it should be thought about simultaneously."

Next comes the part of marketing the public sees: the billboards, the viewbooks,

***continued next page***



from preceding page

the websites, the occasional commercial. Four-year private colleges and universities now spend \$2,073 to recruit a single student, according to the consulting firm Noel-Levitz. “Marketing on American campuses has gone from being an auxiliary function—nearly a suspect activity—to one that receives the full endorsement of campus leadership,” said the firm’s managing

**To generate buzz among alumni, Northeastern has moved from reunions to networking events, having learned that its career-oriented alumni prefer this.**

partner, Robert Moore. “The M word is no longer a linguistic third rail.”

The University of Maryland is entering its 150th anniversary year with a campaign called “Fear the Turtle,” featuring, among other things, 30 fierce-looking temporary Terrapin statues on the campus and 20 more around the state. It’s only one way Maryland is trying to get attention. According to the minutes of a meeting of the university’s marketing team, the head of marketing “would like to make sure that the campus gets some high-profile people on campus in the coming year.”

Case Western Reserve University, whose research showed the name was a mouthful and its shorthand acronym easy to forget, became, simply, “Case.”

Tiny Centre College in Kentucky launched “the Centre Guarantee,” promising every student the chance to study abroad, complete an internship, and graduate in four years, or else get an additional year tuition-free. (“We’ve heard from parents particularly that it’s an attention-getter when you use the word guarantee,” said Norris.)



**“There’s always going to be nervousness” about applying marketing techniques to higher education, says John Lippincott, president of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.**

Babson College hired Digital Influence, a marketing agency, to design a website on which prospective students can post profiles of themselves and correspond with others who have similar interests or who live nearby; the goal is to create a sense of community that makes students feel connected to the school. “A lot of colleges and universities have realized that they need to communicate with their prospective students with an authentic voice and not the voice of adults trying to sound like teenagers,” said Ferguson, of the consulting firm Lipman Hearne. “So a lot more colleges are using their students to communicate with younger students—not just to visit with them on campus day, but to run blogs and to be more involved in sending out real-time communication on the web.”

Northeastern buys radio time in the mid-Atlantic states, in the southwest and on the west coast—places from which it doesn’t get a lot of students. To generate buzz among alumni, it has moved from reunions to networking events, having learned that the career-oriented alumni of its co-op culture prefer this to reunions. “We’re looking at alumni as a way of spreading the word about the university,” said Northeastern’s Brian Kenny. This is known as “buzz,” or, more formally, “viral marketing.” Northeastern now even monitors blogs and other websites to see what people are saying about it.

Northeastern has done something else, too, about which there is less consensus: It has unashamedly announced its intention to move higher in the annual *U.S. News & World Report* college issue, the importance of whose rankings most universities prefer not to acknowledge—unless they do well, in which case they order thousands of reprints and send them to every address on their mailing lists.

Under President Freeland, Northeastern rose in the *U.S. News* rankings from 162nd to 115th, and placed first in the nation among universities that connect classroom study with workplace experience. The university still hopes to crack the top 100 by doing such things as adding faculty to lower its class size, a measure the magazine uses in its calculations.

“Although the rankings get a lot of bad press in higher ed, by and large I think they push institutions in the direction of quality and thereby in the direction Northeastern would want to move,” Freeland said. “The front-end goal was that Northeastern needed to reposition itself from being a local commuter institution to being a national institution, and these are things that would have to improve even if *U.S. News* were not there. It shines a light on things that really needed to improve. For an upwardly mobile institution needing to overcome some reputational drag built up over the years, it’s a huge asset.”

The same phenomenon, of course, can also work in the opposite direction. Cornell fell from sixth to 14th in *U.S. News*, angering students and alumni and forcing the university to launch a marketing campaign that began with a campus-wide debate about revamping the logo. “A lot of people were asking a lot of questions, and there was a very strong consensus that the time had come to give priority to communica-

tions,” said Thomas Bruce, a former Washington public policy consultant who was hired to direct the effort.

The campaign to restore Cornell’s standing even included the deliberation of a fictional character in the *Doonesbury* comic strip, who was deciding between Cornell, Harvard and other schools. In the end, she chose MIT, whose students rigged the voting, but Cornell won *Doonesbury*’s congeniality award. “People have to have a sense of humor,” Bruce said. Besides, he added, applications are up 20 percent, along with SAT scores, and Cornell is rising again in the rankings.

Then again, those rankings might be overrated: A survey by the Lipman Hearne consulting firm found that prospective students do not pay as much attention to them as universities seem to think. Of the 14 most important variables in their decision, the survey found, students put the rankings 12th. “Institutions should take a more sophisticated view of their position in the marketplace than simply rankings,” said Ferguson. “The most important thing for high-achieving kids—the prime marketing target—is knowing that the college or university has a high-quality program in their area of interest. Colleges and universities would do well to be looking at those things that they do best and making sure that the potential students are made aware of that.”

It was with precisely this in mind that the University of Texas’ flagship campus at Austin unleashed an advertising blitz simply called “We’re Texas,” narrated by alumnus Walter Cronkite and created by GSD&M, an Austin-based ad firm founded by five UT alumni whose other clients include Wal-Mart, Southwest Airlines and CBS Sports. “We don’t claim to be able to change the world,” Cronkite’s iconic voice intones. “We just change people. And then they change the world. We’re Texas.” The stylish ads—which point out that, while the university is proud to have a longhorn as a mascot, for example, it also has a Gutenberg Bible—coincided with a capital campaign that raised \$1.63 billion. “It broke through like you would not believe,” said Roy Spence, the ad agency’s CEO.

“Twenty years ago, the thought that an institution like the University of Texas might need or even want to do some of the things that it’s been doing would have been greeted by great skepticism,” said Terry Hartle, senior vice president for government and public affairs at ACE, the American Council on Education. “We see it as a reflection that we are not reaching the public about critical issues in the way that we want to.”

So now ACE is getting into the act, with national advertising campaigns on behalf of its 1,800 member colleges, universities and higher education organizations. One \$4.5 million campaign, called “Solutions for Our Future,” was launched during the NCAA basketball championships. It featured humorous commercials meant to show what the world might be like without university graduates, concluding with the slogan, “America’s colleges and universities: We teach the people who solve the problems and change the world.”



**Higher education consultant Rodney Ferguson believes “colleges and universities have been marketing themselves since Harvard put up the statue of John Harvard in Harvard Yard.”**

“We in higher education have to come down off our collective hilltops and work with the public, work with business and community leaders, and proactively demonstrate our value to the larger society, using methods and language that are easily understood,” said Syracuse University Chancellor Nancy Cantor, chair of the ACE board of directors.

Among taxpayers, support for universities is “a mile wide and an inch deep, because so many people think it’s for the betterment of the individual and not for the betterment of society,” said Spence. “Once you flip the paradigm that colleges and universities are there to benefit society—that they’re a solution machine for America—the dam breaks.” Universities

**As a marketing tool, college rankings might be overrated: A survey found that prospective students do not pay nearly as much attention to them as universities seem to think.**

and the public “need to believe in each other again,” he added.

Back at Northeastern, President Freeland still shakes his head about that World Series-year billboard inside Fenway Park. (The university has renewed the lease annually.) “It seemed counterintuitive to me that the watchers of Red Sox games were similar to kinds of families who apply to Northeastern,” he said. “But I can’t tell you how many comments I got from alumni or parents or faculty or staff telling me it really felt good to see Northeastern out there. It conveyed a sense of an institution on the move, that if Northeastern is doing this, there must be some interesting things going on there.” ♦

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